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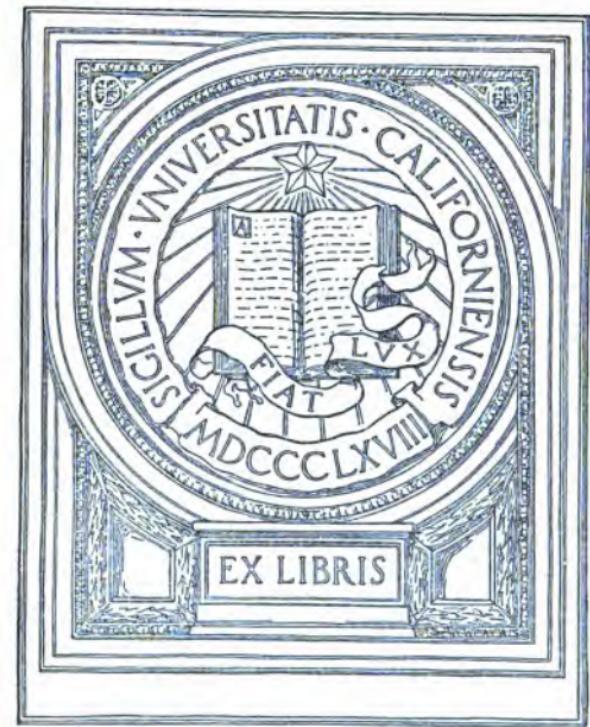
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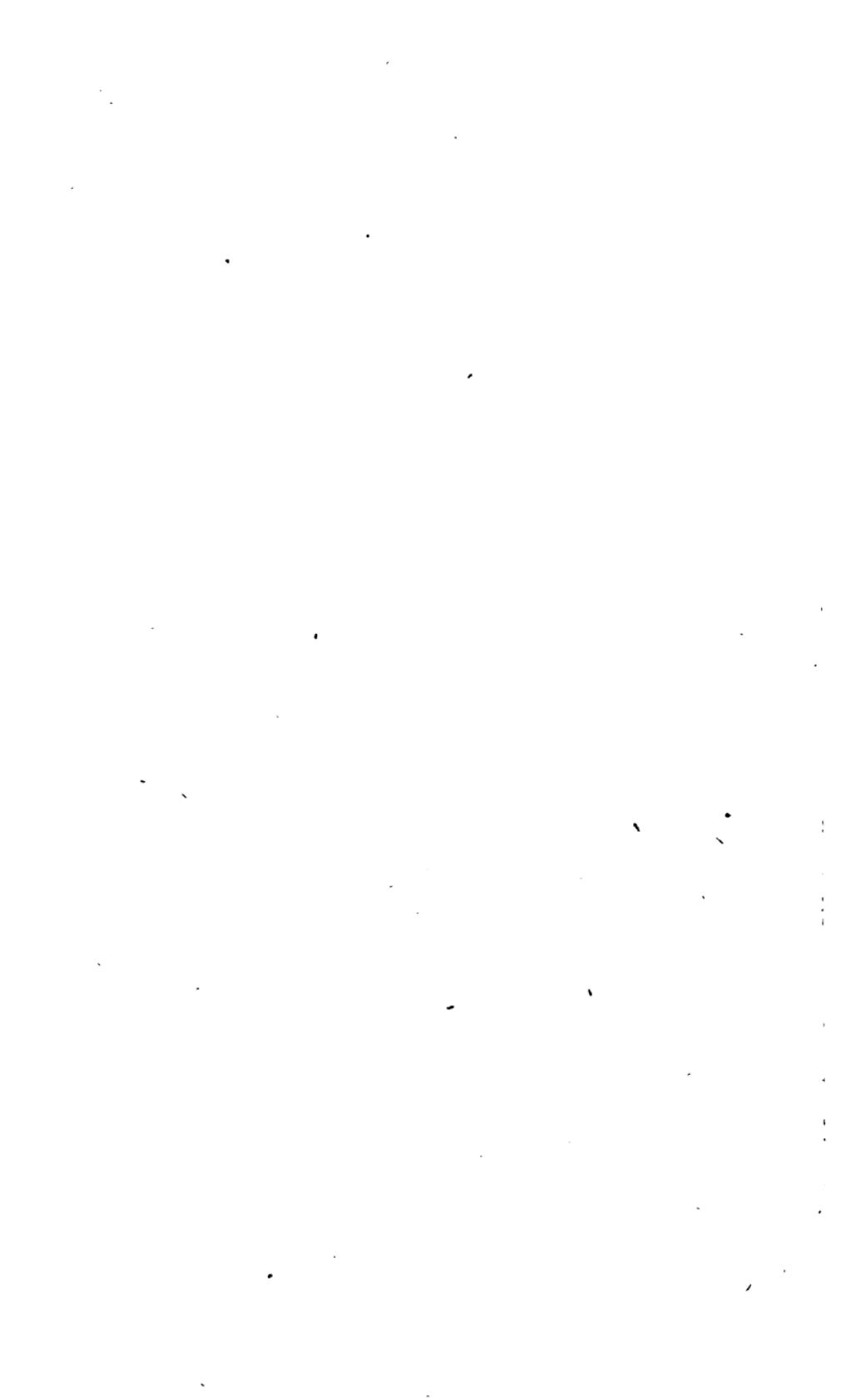
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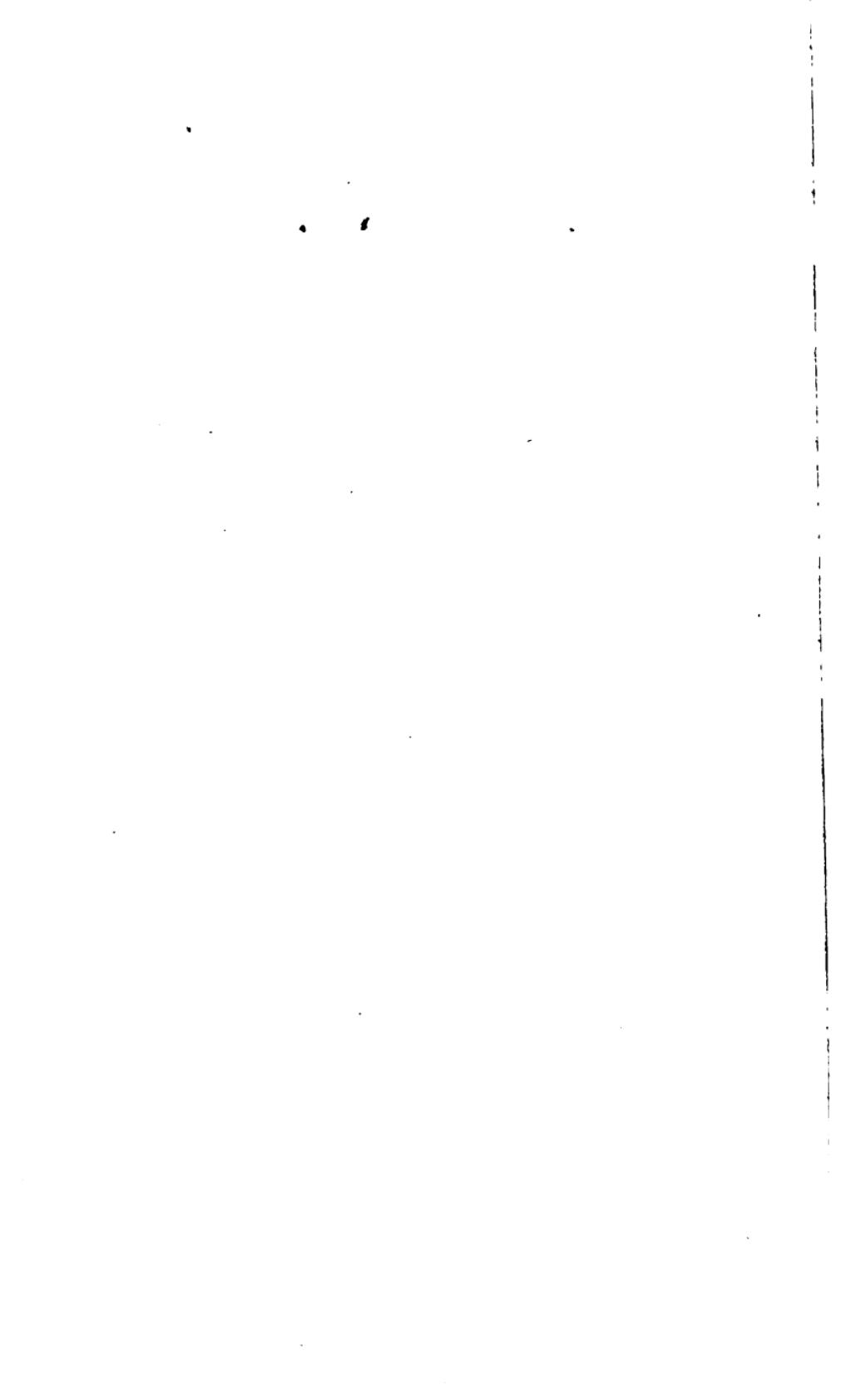
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Geo. H. Colton Esq
from S. D. Lewis



R E C O R D S

OF

T H E H E A R T.

BY

MRS. SARAH ANNA LEWIS.

"

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P R E F A C E.

SOME of the minor pieces contained in this volume have appeared, within the last two or three years, in different papers and periodicals ; some anonymously, and others with the author's name. From the favor with which they have been received, and from the earnest solicitations of friends, and those on whose learning, taste, and judgment the author could rely, she has been induced to present this volume to the public.

Troy, N. Y., Jan. 1844.

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FLORENCE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Poem is founded on an Italian Tradition, related to me by a native of Florence. The time occupied is two months. The scene commences on the banks of the Tiber, near Rome —shifts thence to Sicily, and thence back to the Tiber.

FLORENCE:

A N I T A L I A N T A L E .

—miserabile visu.

ENSID.

—Trovo per tutto

Qualche scoglio a temer.

METASTASIO.

CANTO I.

THE CASTLE.

I.

WHERE yellow Tiber rolls his tide
Onward in smooth tranquillity,
Through myrtle groves and meadows wide,
Defying mutability ;
Which long hath laid her mould-clad finger
On aught else death hath left to linger,

Where Art and Genius had their birth—
The loveliest, fairest spot on earth—
The flocks are gathered to their fold,
The fawns reposing on the wold ;
The bells are rung, the mass is said,
The evening vespers duly made ;
In hut, and cot, and castle dun,
Sleep hath her silent reign begun ;
The Moon is in her summer glow,
And meekly smiles on all below,
The stars are burning in the sky
Like Angels' censers lit on high ;
While weeping lovers lift their eyes
Up to those calm cerulean skies,
Feeling that in those worlds above
Lies the unchequered home of love ;
And in their frenzy of despair
Implore to be translated there,
Where soul its kindred soul will greet,
And baffled hearts each other meet,
Enfranchised from the ills of earth—
The children of a holier birth ;
And there, beneath the moon's pale sheen
Rises full many a mournful scene—
The wide Campagna dim and lone—

The Catacomb of nations gone,
And Rome's seven hills o'er Ruin's hearth,
The mimic Pleiades of earth ;
The cypress in funereal gloom
O'erhanging many a hero's tomb,
Whose glorious memory shall outlive
All that vain pomp and wealth can give,
And shine until Time's latest day,
A halo over dark decay.

Yes, there they sleep ! th' immortal brave,
Entombed in holy Freedom's grave—
The mighty arm that grasped the sword
To put to flight the savage horde,
The tongue that pleaded with applause
For liberty and God's high laws—
Cæsar and Tully, when—oh ! when
Will such bright stars lume earth again ?
There thrones and temples lie around,
There wrecks of empires strew the ground ;
Decay and Slavery have wed,
And Genius rests her drooping head ;
And placid Beauty still appears,
Meek smiling through her limpid tears,
And Death sits throned on Glory's tomb
Triumphant o'er the wrecks of joy and bloom.

II.

By Tiber, Ugo's castle stands,
Surrounded by an olive grove,
And glassy seas, and myrtled strands—
The hallowed shrine of Peace and Love.
The guards are dozing round the wall,
Nor lamp nor step is in the hall,
And at this late and lonely hour
One waning light reveals the tower ;
And there, her rosary completed,
Lord Ugo's only child is seated ;
Her untuned harp and jewels nigh,
A web of rich embroidery,
And flowers that breathe around the room
From golden vases sweet perfume.
She weeps not, but her restless eye
Betrays her deep anxiety ;
Now lost in thoughtful mood she sits—
Now hurried o'er the carpet flits—
Then by the lattice bends her ear—
“ A step ?—’Tis he !” O God ! her fear
If Ugo should her lover spy,
This night—this night, they both must die !

Her slight frame like the aspen shook,
And Reason half her throne forsook ;
With terror pale—with sorrow drunk,
Reeling, upon the couch she sunk.

III.

'Tis past ! LEON is in her room—
A stately youth in manhood's bloom,
With cloak of black and hood of blue,
And hair and eye of sablest hue ;
And by his side a sabre gleaming,
And from his eye his high soul beaming,
Lighting his lofty olive brow
Paling with apprehension now—
“ Be calm ! sweet FLORENCE, do not fear ;
The wall is scaled, and I am here,”
He said, half drawing from its sheath
His blade, “ thy champion until death ;
Nor have I breath or time to waste—
Nay, prudence bids me be in haste ;
A few words only can I say,
Which I could trust none to convey—
Words far too pure—too sacred—dear,

For other ears than thine to hear—
Wilt thou be mine?—forever mine?—
 Speak, fairest; Angels hover near,
From thy sweet lips love's pledge divine
 To waft unto a holier sphere.
Oh! is the smile in that bright eye,
That cheek's soft blush my bless'd reply?—
Now I am happy! come what will,
Life hath for me nor storm nor ill.

IV.

I KNOW the grudge and lasting ire
Thy father bears my haughty sire;
The danger of a secret union—
Ay, e'en if known, this brief communion;
That if discovered, Ugo's wrath
And hate will fatal prove to both:
But, dearest, this shall part us never—
Death—only death—our fate shall sever!

To-morrow, e'en before the dawn
Awakes the lark upon the lawn,
My ship will sail for Sicily,

Where two months absent I must be,
Ere I return to Italy,
And, lovely FLORENCE, back to thee.
Twice thirty days just from this night,
Prepare thee for a speedy flight ;
When bells proclaim the vesper hour,
Be near the Tiber, in the bower
Where, by the stars and pale moonlight,
Before we've met, on many a night ;
And ready there my bark shall be,
To bear us swiftly o'er the sea
To some bright land afar to dwell—
Till then, sweet maiden, fare thee well.”

“ Must—must we part ? ”—the pallid maid
Raised her dark eyes and trembling said,
“ Oh ! I would rather die to-night,
Than thou should'st leave one hour my sight.
I fear the guilt—I feel the woe,
To love thee 'gainst my father's will ;
He bids me swear it to forego—
I swear, and doubly love thee still.
He bids me wrench thee from my heart,
But in that act would life depart.
With thee to live—with thee to die, ”

Whether beneath our native sky,
Or in some wild, forsaken land—
In cave, or isle, on desert strand,
Is all I wish, is all I hope,
Whate'er the ills with which we cope:—
Oh! must thou go? Will the dark sea,
Dear LEON! give thee back to me?—
I know not why—I fear no more,
LEON, thou'l see Italia's shore.”

“ O FLORENCE! fairest! speak not thus—
The grave alone can sever us;
My journey shall be brief, and then
I will not part from thee again,
Nor now in soul: as o'er his track
The Hadjee's spirit stealeth back
To worship still at Mecca's shrine,
Or faithful Jew's to Palestine;
So, wandering o'er the dark blue sea,
My spirit will return to thee.
When thou art singing in the grove,
When thou dost tune thy harp to love,
Then hovering nigh my soul shall be,
To catch the heavenly melody;
When evening shade the green earth dims,

When slumber sweet enchains thy limbs,
It will be here to guard thy form,
And save thee, loveliest one, from harm."

He said, and as quick tears did start,
 And overrun each silken lid,
He clasped her sobbing to his heart,
 While down his cheeks the bright drops slid.
To hearts wrapt in such holy dream,
Ages could but a moment seem ;
So lost to every thing around,
They might not hear the earthquake's sound.
Around his neck her white arms wreathed—
Save that at intervals they breathed,
As sympathy their bosoms heaved,—
One looking on would have believed
Them alabaster figures there,
Which Art had wrought with strictest care :
Love prompts him ever thus to stay,
Now Danger urges him away ;
And from the hallowed spell he started,
 As at the tread of armed men,—
One long embrace—and then they parted
 To meet—but never thus again.

V.

MORN is abroad, the sun is up,
The dew fills high each lily's cup ;
Ten thousand flowerets springing there
Diffuse their incense through the air,
And smiling hail the morning beam ;
The fawns plunge panting in the stream,
Or through the vale with light foot spring ;
Insect and bird are on the wing,
And all is bright, as when in May
Young Nature holds a holiday.

VI.

THE rising tide with heavy flow
From sea to shore rolls to and fro,
And wailing, breaks upon each shoal,
Like Sorrow's tempests o'er the soul.
Afar upon the restless sea,
Bound to $\text{\textit{A}}\text{\textit{E}}\text{\textit{tnean}}$ Sicily,
Lord LEON's bark with swelling sail
Walks on before the rushing gale,

Across the brine, where wildly ~~test~~
On rocks *Æneas'* fleet was lost.²
On—on she flies, before the wind,
The main ahead, the shore behind,
Receding to a misty speck.
The sailors gather on the deck,
To see their native land go down,
The watery world around them thrown ;
And once again, with tearful eye,
A farewell to their country sigh.
On the lofty poop Lord LEON sits,
His elbow resting on his knee ;
And when the wave no more permits
Him sight of sunny Italy,
He takes his lute, and sweeps its chords,
Chanting these few and simple words.

SONG.

THOU hast faded from my sight,
Fair Italy ;
But still, thy star shines bright
To me—to me.

Thy sweetest, fairest flower,
My Italy,

I'll pluck soon from its bower
In secrecy ;—

And bear it to some isle
Far o'er the sea,
To feast upon its smile
Unceasingly.

VII.

AND while he sang, a minstrel old,
Whose wrinkled brow a dark tale told
Of wrong and agony, drew near,
To give his song attentive ear.

VIII.

His frame was bowed, his limbs were weak,
Sorrow had furrowed deep his cheek ;
And o'er his thin, dishevelled hair,
That bore no marks of recent care,
His beard that on his bosom hung,
A century her frost had flung.

Perchance he was descendant of
The wandering tribe of troubadours,
Who sang of war and ladye love,
And knightly feats on Paynim shores.

I X.

His harp he loosened from his arm,
And while he eyed young LEON's form,
His every movement closely scanned,
He touched the strings with trembling hand.

S O N G .

IN Sicily there lives a maid
Of youth and beauty rare ;
With step as light as Elfin fawn's,
With form beyond compare.

Her hair is like the fairest flax,
Her skin like ivory,
Her cheeks more fresh than freshest rose
Of spicy Araby.

Her sire—he is of noble birth,
His gold and lands are great ;

Young ROSALIE the only heir
Of all his high estate.

And many a lofty knight, and lord,
And baron of the land,
Have sought upon their bended knee
That lovely lady's hand.

But she doth turn away from all,
With a tear in her blue eye,
And vows that she will never wed
But the Lord of Italy,

He is a youthful nobleman,
Who follows much the sea,
And often anchors in the bay
Of rocky Sicily.

'Tis said he soon will wed a maid
Fair as his native sky—
If this be so, young ROSALIE
With grief will pine and die.

X.

THE song lit up Lord LEON's eye,
His pulse beat quick—he knew not why;

He gently waved the harper near,
That he the song might better hear ;
Prayed, if it were not too much pain,
The minstrel would repeat the strain.
The veteran moved his harp along,
Twice o'er again he sang the song ;
And while Lord LEON lauds his skill,
Thoughts dark and vain his bosom thrill.

X I.

“ WHERE dost thou dwell ? where hast thou been ?
A minstrel so infirm and gray
As thou, before I ne'er have seen
Or heard of, save in harper's lay
Or legend old ; ” the youthful lord
With gentle seeming asked the bard.

X II.

“ STRANGER ! in sooth this frame is weak,
These trembling limbs great age bespeak ;
Yet oft I dare the stormy deep,

And strive my mournful lyre to sweep.
Save it, my only source of bliss,
I roam the world companionless ;
The minstrel's fire, his dreams divine,
His heritage of woe are mine.
Stranger ! for years my care hath been,
The heart from love's despair to win ;
My harp on Hellas' shore I've strung,
Afar in Palestine have sung ;
And where the Hakim's art hath failed,
My melody hath oft prevailed ;
Me far on land and sea they've sought,
Many the mighty cures I've wrought,
And timid love to wedlock brought.

XIII.

I HAVE been to Ausonia's shore,
To heal the lovely EMILIE ;
To Sicily am crossing o'er,
To see the Lady ROSALIE.
And when I dissipate her fears,
Relieve her heart, and dry her tears,
By speaking many a cheering word

Of love, and the young noble lord,
I shall return to Italy
To soothe the mournful EMILIE."

XIV.

" I'd fain, sweet minstrel, thou would'st call,
And sweep thy lyre in Ugo's hall ;
There dwells a lady young and fair,
Who'll give thy song attentive ear."

XV.

" Thy will, young lord, shall be obeyed,"
The aged harper calmly said ;
And as the vessel cleaved her way,
To LEON many a tender lay
He sang, of each wild storied clime,
And chivalry of olden time ;
The beauty of fair ROSALIE,
And her high state beyond the sea.

XVI.

ARRIVED at last, the happy crew
Salute the land that glads their view :

When safely anchored in the bay,
With trembling footsteps from the shore,
The hoary minstrel leads the way,
Unto the lady's castle door ;
There tunes his harp, and to its sound
Comes ROSALIE with blithesome bound,
Hope smiling in her soft blue eye,
Her mein all joy—all ecstasy ;
By blushes deep her thoughts confess,
While ushering in her bard and guest.

XVII.

THE bounties spread before them here,
The flowing bowl, and welcome cheer,
The banquets rich, and festivals
That nightly fill the sumptuous halls,
In honor of the noble guest,
Who like a monarch is caressed ;
The minstrel's arts, and subtle wiles,
The witchery of the lady's smiles,
The magic of her lofty grace,
Her fatal charms I need not trace :

But all the fickleness of Love,
 How very faithless he can prove
 To those he makes his warmest vows,
 To what false shrines man often bows,
 And what the youthful lord befel
 For wedding the “ Sicilian belle,”
 The sequel of this tale will tell.

CANTO II.

THE BANK OF THE TIBER.

— Ab, tu non sai,
 Qual guerra di pensieri
 Agita l’alma mia.

METASTASIO.

I.

THE waves are smooth, the wind is calm,
 Onward the golden stream¹ is gliding,
 Amid the myrtle and the palm²
 And ilices³ its margin hiding ;
 Now sweeps it o’er the jutting shoals
 In murmurs, like despairing souls ;

Now deeply, softly flows along,
Like ancient minstrel's warbling song ;
Then slowly, darkly, thoughtfully,
Loses itself in the mighty sea.
The sky is clear, the stars are bright,
The moon reposes on her light ;
On many a budding, fairy blossom,
Are glittering evening's dewy tears,
Like sparkling gems on Beauty's bosom,
When she in festal garb appears.
The summer flowers, in freshest bloom,
Like modest virgins smiling there,
Are breathing all around perfume
Upon the mute enamored air ;
The citron-trees along the strand,
With golden fruitage brightly teem ;
The lilies in the water stand,
Watching their shadows in the stream,
And ring the while their tiny bells,
As round their feet the billow swells.

II.

AND, there beneath a cypress tree,
The beautiful young FLORENCE stands,

In silence watching wistfully
The waves that wash the sparkling sands :
Her velvet robe, deep wrought with gold,
Falling in many a graceful fold ;
Her sable tresses flowing back
Beneath a cap of velvet black ;
A diamond on her high brow gleaming,
A brilliant on her bosom beaming,
Give her so stately, rich a mein,
That she might vie with Egypt's queen,
When sailing on the Cydnus she
Went forth to meet Mark Antony.

III.

THE Moon is past her zenith now,
The dew is heavy on each bough,
And ill~~at~~ease the lady seems ;
Oft up and down the lawn she paces,
Then sudden starts as one that dreams,
Or some unwelcome thought retraces,
And stills her heart, and leans her ear
The long expected oar to hear ;—
But all is silent as the grave,

Nor boat, nor oar disturbs the wave,
To intimate her lover near,
Or soothe her agonizing fear.
With both white hands she clasps her brow,
As hope were quenched forever now,
And peace were lost beyond recall—
“ ‘Tis so ! ‘tis so !—I see it all !—
Ere this I’ve feared it might be so—
False LEON ! canst thou strike such blow ?
I had a dream—a troubled dream—
In which I saw thy dark eyes beam
Upon a fair Sicilian Maid,
In her white nuptial robes arrayed ;
I saw her at the altar stand—
I saw thee take her lily hand,
And joyous hailed the morning light
Which broke the vision of that night !
Yet oft to me it would return,
And overwhelm my soul in wo ;
But then the vision I would spurn,—
For oh ! I could not deem it so !
But ere the dawning of the morrow
‘Twill prove an omen of my sorrow.—
My faithful page, come hither, come !
This long delay may seal our doom ;

Mount thee upon the fleetest steed,
And with the winged lightning's speed,
To Count GUDONI's castle go,
And what betideth let me know."—
She said, and in her wildered state,
Unnoticed passed the castle gate,
And by the watchful mastiffs' lairs,
Tripped lightly o'er the marble stairs,
Flew through the corridor's dim gloom,
And safely reached her distant room.
Upon the silken couch she fell,
And strove her torturing doubts to quell ;
But easier 'tis the waves to still
That roll amid the stormy ocean,
Than subjugate unto the will
The troubled bosom's wild commotion ;—
Sprung up and flung aside her hood—
Paced rapidly across the floor—
Then stopped—before her mirror stood,
And while she scanned her beauty o'er,
By dress so richly now displayed,
Revenge and Pride called to her aid.
With hasty step and firm intent,
Unto a secret casket went,
A little packet thence withdrew—

Love's tokens dear, whilst yet deemed true—
The foldings which its contents hid
Quickly with trembling hand undid ;
Over each missive glanced her eye,
Then for another dashed it by ;
And when she recognized each line
That erst to her appeared divine,—
Learned well how little such are worth,
She laid them all upon the hearth ;—
The miniature of LEON put
Upon the medley fated pyre ;
Stamped it with her indignant foot
And strength of slighted love's keen ire.
Gold chains, and gems, and costly pearl,
The locket with his ebon curl ;
Stript from her hand a diamond ring,
With each memento that might bring
A tender thought, or transient scene
Of one who had so faithless been ;
Then to the pile the torch applied,
And round them while the swift flames glide,
Like lightning ere the thunders roll,
Effacing casket, gem, and scroll,
Each chain becomes a livid thread ;
With low, unfaltering voice she said—

“ O LEON ! I could see thy soul
Writhe in thy frame, girt round by fire,
Calmly as I behold thy scroll,
Beneath that fatal flame expire ;”
Then sank upon the ottoman,
And watched the blaze as on it ran ;
Love’s gilded tokens all consuming,
But not his fiery pangs entombing.—
No ! deep within her throbbing heart,
Quivering hangs his poisoned dart,
Sore wounding though it doth not kill,
And yet to cure defying skill ;
It sends its victim forth to roam,
A drifting wreck on life’s rough foam,
In passion’s wildest tempests whirled,
A raving maniac through a ruthless world.

I V .

“ BUT list !—my page !—be still my heart !—
To feign is now thy only part.—
What do I fear ? Why tremble so ?
Whence this new ague-fit of wo ?
He’ll only tell what now I know—

What dreams have taught me long ago,
The songs the minstrel sang to me,
Who late came o'er from Sicily.
I knew not why, but as he sung,
 The bridal song of ROSALIE
Seemed in my ear the larum rung
 Of some approaching misery.
Prophetic was its every tone,
And mournful as the midnight moan
Of tempest midst the forest lone :—
But all too vain—such pondering !
I'll hear whate'er my page may bring—
No fiercer pangs my heart can feel,
Though death to-night my doom should seal !”

V.

THE page approached at her command,
And kneeling kissed her snowy hand,
An anxious glance upon her flung,
And thus began with faltering tongue.

VI.

“ IN Count GUDONI’s spacious hall
Rise loud the sounds of festival,

The silvery lamps are burning bright—
 Lord LEON hath returned to-night,
 And like a Peri by his side,
 I saw his fair Sicilian Bride—
 Her brow”——

“Enough, my page, 'tis well,
 What further passed thou needst not tell ;—
 Peace to Lord LEON and his bride,”
 Firmly, yet softly, she replied ;
 “My secret keep—for if one breath
 My sire should learn, 'twill cause my death ;—
 Refrain thy tears—weep not for me—
 Myself am calm :—now to thy bed,
 With Heaven's best blessing on thy head.”

VII.

THE faithful page dropped on his knee,
 And said, while tears suffused his eye,
 “My life is consecrate to thee,
 Whate'er thy future destiny.
 Long may thy cheek retain its bloom,
 Nor aught but joy thine eyes illume ;”—
 Rose, bowed, and vanished from the room.

VIII.

“**ALONE!**” she cried, but all was o'er,
And cold and prostrate on the floor,
Like one o'erthrown by instant death,
She fell ; nor showed she pulse, or breath,
Or sign of life, till morning bright
Had filled her room with rosy light.
Bewildered then and ashy pale—
As some wan spirit of the vale,
The livelong night in shadowy lea
Carousing in grief's revelry ;—
As one who wakes from sleep elysian,
When hideous images have crossed
Abruptly o'er the mental vision,
And all his thoughts in chaos tost ;—
Or rocked upon the stormy streams
That rush along the land of dreams ;
Or starting from protracted trance,
Flings round a wild and hurried glance—
She woke : blood on her lip, and hair,—
Upon her pallid brow despair ;
Up quickly from the carpet sprung,

Backward her raven tresses flung,
Erased each mark and every speck
That could betray her heart's sad wreck,
Or she her room that night had left,
And of life's all had been bereft;
Doffed the rich garb that yesterday
(With yesterday, oh ! had life flown !)
Her charms so lovely did display ;
Night's white apparel then put on,
Ran mutely o'er her beads of gold,
Till one and all were strictly told ;
A golden cross placed on her breast,
Then laid her weary limbs to rest.

IX.

At dressing hour she turned her head
And to her maidens gently said—
“ Hie ye away with footsteps light ;
The hideous visions of the night
Have from my eyelids driven rest ;”—
And then again her pillow pressed.

X.

THE morn was past, day on the wane,
When her attendants came again
With invitation to attend
That night in Count MONONI's hall,
Where LEON and his bride would lend
The charm unto the festival.

X I.

“COULD it be so?” She gasped for breath.
Had she received a hest for death,
An irresistible command
To hasten to the exile's land,
Where Hope and Mercy never smiled,
Her heart could not have beat so wild.
Tumultuous was her bosom's swell,
Her arm like alabaster fell
Down on the snowy vesture then—
As wan as it, save where each vein
Beneath its soft transparence shines

Like purple threads in marble mines.
Thus pale and lost to sense she lies,
The hot tears streaming from her eyes,
Swollen and throbbing with the pain
Of the bewildered, fevered brain ;
And cold and damp her brow, as Death
Had laid his icy finger there ;
Hurried and hard her every breath,
As when life's parting hour is near.

XII.

MANY the high resolves she made,
Many emotions dark allayed
That rose to give her bosom aid :
She would not shed another tear
For him she once had held so dear ;—
Henceforth her cheek should bloom as bright,
Her step be in the dance as light
As when one glance from LEON's eyes
Was more to her than Paradise ;
Her songs, her smiles should be as gay ;
No sigh her weakness should betray—
Thus she had pondered as she lay.

But ah ! we know not till they're stirred,
What notes among the heart's strings slumber ;
A reckless touch of one fine chord
Wakes tones that life's brief years outnumber,
Whose doleful jarring never ceases
Till Death the troubled soul releases.

XIII.

WHEN sense and reason had returned,
Passions again resumed their sway,
And in her bosom feelings burned
Which vengeance only can allay—
Especially in woman's heart,
When it is left to writhe and smart
'Neath slighted love's envenomed dart.
That night in Count MONONI's hall
She would attend the festival,
Her beauty deck in richest style,
And teach her lip its sweetest smile ;
To LEON make her cheek and eye
The anguish of her heart belie.
Resolving thus, she straightway rose
And donned in haste her morning clothes ;

Summoned her page, and to him gave
The orders which she wished to have
Promptly and strictly now obeyed,
And then dismissed him for her maid ;
The dress and jewels fixed upon,
The arduous toilet then begun.

XIV.

As she proceeds, her radiant form
Surpasses all its wonted charm ;
Her eyes so wildly, darkly roll,
Revealing her deep-troubled soul,
They volumes at one glance bespeak.
Slightly she tinged her pallid cheek,
Diffusing over it a bloom
Resembling first rose-buds of spring,
Or such as fitful fevers bring ;
Then, whiter than the ostrich's plume
A satin robe with ermine trimmed,
She donned ; her ringlets, brightly gemmed,
Left flowing darkly to her waist,
And diamonds, that a queen had graced,
Upon her snowy bosom placed.

X V.

EARLY in Count MONONI's hall,
She moved amid the festival,
Outshining all the bright and bland—
The loveliest of her lovely land.
She stands beside a marble post,
Upon her breast her small hands crossed,
Her gems and diamonds gleaming bright,
Beneath the golden lamps' full light ;
Around her throng th' enchanted crowd,
The young, the fair, the brave, the proud,
Hanging upon her words divine
That flow in mellow Florentine ;
For there her youthful days she spent,
While war her native country rent.

X VI.

“ THERE comes Lord LEON with his bride ! ”
Aloud a hundred voices cried ;
“ Behold how beautiful, how fair,

She with the white wreath in her hair."

While thither FLORENCE turned her face

With all a high Sultana's grace,

Lord LEON brushed her robe aside,

And from her burning glance of pride

Turned his as instantly away,

As from the sun's meridian ray.

But she, assuming mildest mien,

Stepped forward with a smile serene,—

A mask his subtlest powers defied,—

Addressed him softly, gracefully,

And prayed to know his lovely bride—

"The beauteous Belle of Sicily."

All wonted salutations past,

A gracious look upon them cast,

With words and smiles that could but charm;

Linked in the bride's her jewelled arm,

Moved on amid the glittering throng,

Where Beauty led the dance along;

Exerted all her arts to please,

Till LEON felt himself at ease;

And ere the festival was ended,

With them amidst the dance she blended;

Lastly with his joined her fair hand,

Within the bounding Saraband;*

And while to minstrel's sprightly tune
They tripped along the gay saloon,
With quivering lip, yet air most bland,
A note unseen placed in his hand.

XVII.

THE music's hushed, the dance is done,
The revellers to their homes have gone ;
And sleep enchains each weary limb,
Save hers whose eyes with tears are dim.
Once more within her sumptuous room,
Her spirit whelmed in darkest gloom ;
Upon the couch in silence deep,
With none her secret wo to weep,
Or lend her kindly sympathy,—
The sick heart's only remedy ;
For tears, alas ! too fair—divine—
Sits now the lonely Florentine ;
Her head reclining on her hand,
Before her placed an ivory stand ;
Two golden cups upon it, filled
With wine in her own land distilled ;
A vase of freshest, purest flowers,

That day culled from Italian bowers,
Is smiling brightly, sweetly there,
In mockery of her lone despair.

XVIII.

A step is in the corridor,
A hand rests on the yielding door,
And to her mournful, gentle hest,
Slowly within Lord Leon came ;
The feelings he would have repress
Like aspen shook his manly frame.
“ Be calm,” the lady rising said,
“ There is no cause for agitation ;
The note I gave thee only prayed
A friendly reconciliation ;
Such as our former intercourse
Upon us both would seem to force.
From childhood up we have been friends,
And late methought we might be more ;
But lovers’ bonds Fate often rends,
And bids them hallowed dreams give o’er.
The change thou suddenly hast made,
The love I bore thee ill repaid ;

But, in the presence of high Heaven,
LEON, by me thou art forgiven.
Upon the past let neither think ;—
 To seal for aye our friendliness,
Pray, let us now together drink
 The glass of sweet forgetfulness.”
And LEON, by her kindness warmed,
 And by her beauty doubly charmed,
While keen remorse his bosom rack'd,
 And half regretting his rash act,
A moment clasped her hand in his,
 Printed on it one fervent kiss,
And o'er departed, hallowed years
 Both mingled silently their tears,
Then raised their cups the wine to sip,
 And as the goblet pressed his lip,
She held her breath, gazed in his face,
 As there some secret thought to trace ;
And when its contents he had quaffed,
 Loudly and frantically she laughed,
And reckless drained the fatal draught.

XIX.

AND pale and corpse-like there they stood,
As held by some unhallowed spell,

Till to their hearts flowed back the blood,—
Then shrieking on the floor they fell.
A moment, cold as lifeless clay,
In strong convulsive fits they lay,
The spirit groping its dark way,
Unlit by reason's faintest ray ;
Then rose, and met their eyes of fire,
With horrid scream, and visage dire,
Like two fierce demons on their flight,
That meet along the realms of night.
With livid cheeks and lips all black,
Each from the other then drew back ;
Each bent on each a hideous gaze,
Till from their frozen, ghastly eyes,
The parting soul withdrew its rays,
To wing its flight to other skies.
And there, when morning's limpid light
Broke through the damask curtains bright,
They sat all cold, and stark, and still,
In every vein death's icy chill—
The frightful wrecks of mutual ill.

X X.

OLD Ugo to the spot was led
By many a menial's piercing cry,

And darted on the ghastly dead
The gladiator from his eye.
Th' appalling sight, nor pity, love,
His iron soul had power to move ;
Long dormant feelings now up start
Like stinging serpents in his heart,
Shooting cold tremors through each vein,
And fiery venom to the brain.
He drew his sword half from its sheath,
As if to wreak his ire on Death ;
Then thrust it back, and with a sneer
Bid vassals go prepare the bier.

No weeds, no funeral pomp was there ;
No tears, no knell, no holy prayer,
Nor benison besought from heaven ;
But in the silent hour of even,
By menial hands they were conveyed
Slowly along the myrtle shade
To an unconsecrated grave ;
Their constant dirge the moaning wave.

XXI.

AND there they sleep ! how calm their rest !
The long unbroken dream of death ;

Each ruder voice around repressed,

As timid nature held her breath

In that lone vale. One rose appears

There, watered by a Spirit's tears;

Fruit-buds just open ere they die,

Nought reaches to maturity.

This all observe; the cause none tell.—

They call it still, "The Spectre Dell,"

As by with guarded tread they go.

"Perchance here happed some deed of woe."

Two ghastly figures oft are seen,

With pallid brow, and haggard mien;

At midnight hour strange sounds are heard:

To enter here none e'er have dared.

Nor cross nor crypt doth mark the spot,

Or tell the mournful sleepers' lot;

The cypress in funereal gloom

Folds its dark arms above the tomb.

Since that dark eve, its sickly sod

No human foot hath ever trod;

But when night draws her curtain there,

Sits weeping by it mute Despair;

And Sorrow utters sadder wail

Along that dim and silent vale.

XXII.

NEVER again that fair-haired bride
Saw her young lord. What did betide
Him on the night he left her side
She never knew.—'Twas mystery all.
A few days in GUDONI's hall
She lingered, like the fading rose,
As hue by hue its beauty goes,
And every petal is decayed.
Across the sea she was conveyed
To her own isle; but she was changed.
She dwelt in a fantastic realm
Of broken images, or ranged
The abyss of madness, where no helm
Or guiding star the soul assists,
Amidst its frightful, spectral mists.
Oft there, where she had reigned the queen
Or deity of bower and hall,
And moved in maiden's brightest sheen,
Before the spell-bound gaze of all,
She wandered slowly through the grove,
Her pale brow with the willow bound,

Humming sad words of withered love,
Or sending mournful wail around ;—
Opened her arms in pleasing cheer,
To clasp some phantom of the air,
Whom she would deem her **LEON**, come
To bear her with him to his home ;
When from her grasp it would recede,
Herself fling prostrate on the mead,
In wild despair its presence plead :
And thus she hourly raved the same,
Till soon the spirit doffed the frame
To moulder in the maniac's grave,
Beside the clear Sicilian wave.

X X I I I .

WITH lightning's speed conjectures flew,
From hut to castle, sea, bayou ;—
Where had the Lady **FLORENCE** gone ?—
Where Count **GUDONI**'s only son ?
Were questions oft repeated there,
With tearful eyes and anxious care.

A thorough search for them was made,
Afar o'er mountain, ocean, glade,

By weeping friends,—the faithful crew;
But none their sad tale fully knew,
Save those who saw them on that morn
To their unhallowed burial borne.
Fate spread around their hapless tomb
Her sable pall of deepest gloom.

NOTES.

CANTO I.

NOTE 1, Sect. IV. p. 7.

“With thee to live, with thee to die.”

The Bride of Abydos.

NOTE 2, Sect. VI. p. 11.

“Across the brine where, wildly tost,
On rocks Æneas’ fleet was lost.”

“—— Ac venti, velut agmine facto,
Quà data porta, ruunt, et terras turbine perflant.
Incubuere mari, totumque à sedibus imis
Unà Eurusque Notusque ruunt, creberque procellis
Africus, et vastos volvunt ad litora fluctus.
Insequitur clamorque virum, stridorque rudentum.
Eripiunt subito nubes cœlumque, diemque,
Teucrorum ex oculis: ponto nox incubat atra.
Intonuere poli, et crebris micat ignibus æther:

Præsentemque viris intentant omnia mortem.
 Exemplò Æneas solvuntur frigore membra.
 Ingemit, et duplices tendens ad sidera palmas,
 Talia voce refert: O terque quaterque beati,
 Queis ante ora patrum, Trojæ sub mœnibus altis,
 Contigit oppetere! * * *

“Talia jactanti stridens Aquilone procella
 Velum adversa ferit, fluctusque ad sidera tollit.
 Franguntur remi: tum prora avertit, et undis
 Dat latus: insequitur cumulo præruptus aquæ mons.
 Hi summo in fluctu pendent: his unda dehiscens
 Terram inter fluctus aperit: furit æstus arenis,
 Tres Notus abreptas in saxa latentia torquet:
 Saxa, vocant Itali, mediis quæ in fluctibus aras,
 Dorsum immane mari summo. Tres Eurus ab alto,
 In brevia et syrtes urget, miserabile visu;
 Illuditque vadis, atque aggere cingit arenæ.
 Unam, quæ Lycios fidumque vehebat Orontem,
 Ipsius ante oculos ingens à vertice pontus
 In puppim ferit: excutitur, pronusque magister
 Volvitur in caput: ast illam ter fluctus ibidem
 Torquet agens circum, et rapidus vorat æquore vortex.
 Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto:
 Arma virûm, tabulæque, et Troia gaza per undas.
 Jam validam Ilionei navem, jam fortis Achatæ,
 Et quæ vectus Abas, et quæ grandævus Alethes,
 Vicit hyems: laxis laterum compagibus omnes
 Accipiunt inimicum imbre, rimisque fatiscunt.”

Æneid, Lib. I. line 82.

C A N T O II.

NOTE 1, Sect. I. page 19.

“Onward the golden stream is gliding.”

“The Tiber, stained to a deep yellow by the fertilizing soil which it has washed away from its banks, glitters like a belt of gold along the plain in the sunshine that irradiates with Italian clearness the sward, the scattered trees, and the shadowy hills.”—*Spalding's History of Italy and the Italian Islands*, Vol. I. p. 204.

NOTE 2, Sect. I. p. 19.

“Amid the myrtle and the palm.”

The palm is not a native of Italy, but as I find that it was there cultivated, and still continues to ornament many of the groves and gardens at Rome, I have taken the liberty to introduce it here.

“We cross,” says Spalding, “the mouth of a canal which discharges into the sea the united waters of Virgil's rivers Ufins and Amasenus. Remains of its harbor may be traced; and considerable ruins, partly Pelasgic, partly Roman, and some belonging to the dark ages, surmount the noble rock which rises from the palm-trees of its hanging garden.”

NOTE 3, Sect. I. p. 19.

“And ilices its margin hiding.”

The majesty of the Laurentine Forest is still represented by noble groves of the pine and the dark-leaved ilex, particularly about

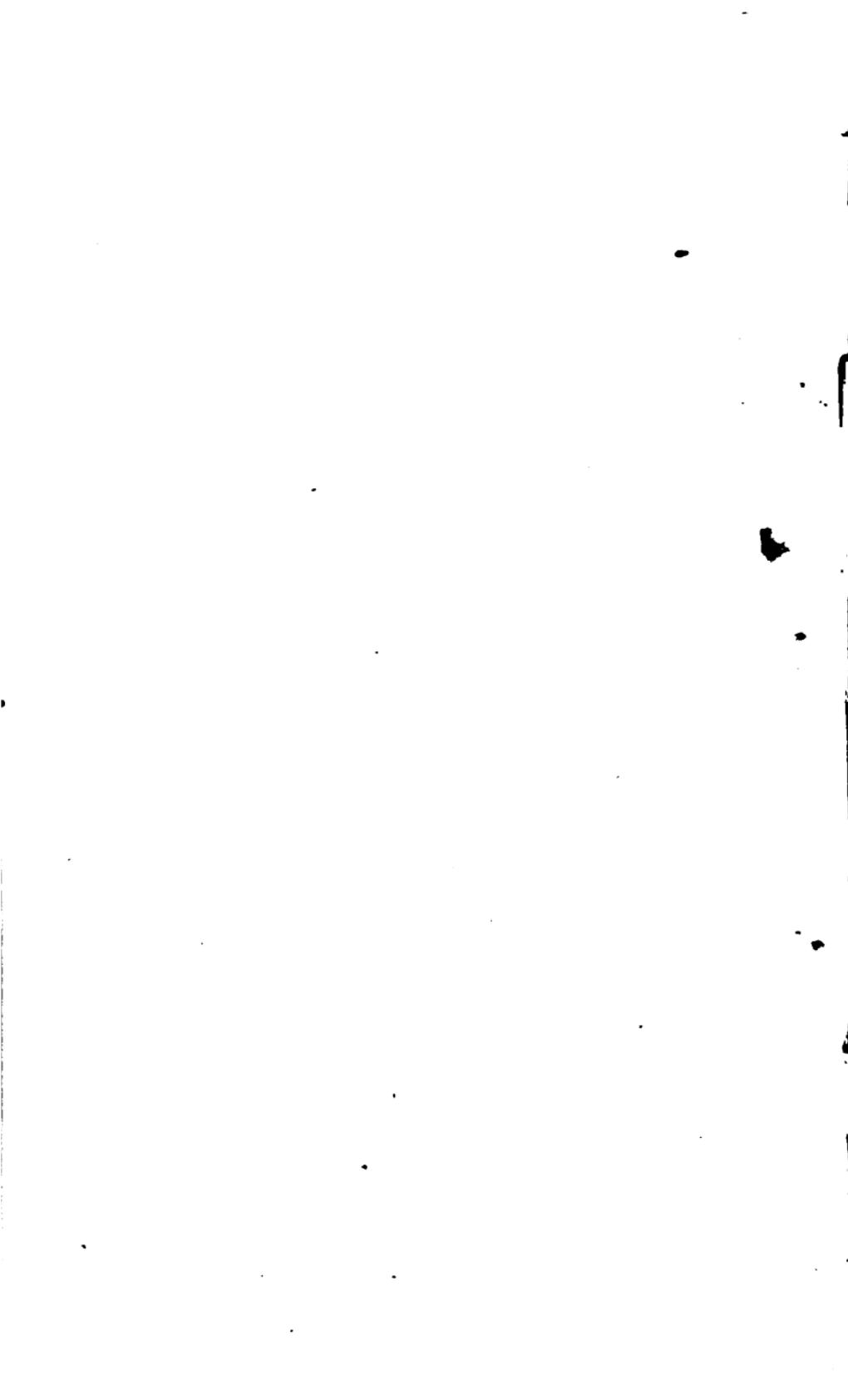
the mouth of the Tiber, skirting the sea like a line of gigantic columns, while the laurel, the myrtle, the arbutus, and wild olive form in many spots impervious thickets with ivy and heath."—*Spalding's History of Italy and the Italian Islands*, Vol. I. p. 241.

NOTE 4, Sect. XVI. p. 35.

"Saraband."

A Spanish dance in use in Italy.

Z E N E L.



Z E N E L. *

CANTO I.

For thee, I'll lock up all the gates of love—

* * * * *
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, Act IV. Scene I.

For time at last sets all things even—

And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

MAZEPPE.

I.

SHE was a peasant's daughter blithe and fair,
Her cheeks fresh as the rose of Paradise,
Locks like the raven's wing, dark languid eyes,
And young and beautiful beyond compare—
An airy flitting bird, aye soft and meek,
Modest and gentle as the timid fawn,
When first it ventures forth upon the lawn—
Sought and beloved was young ZENEL : but like

* Pronounced *Thanail*.

The radiant sunbeam prisoned in a cloud
Ere it has traversed all its missioned way
From the metropolis of light and day—
A meteor seen, then lost in night's dim shroud—
The rainbow's bright but evanescent glow
Was the pure maiden's sad career below.

II.

THE summer moon is shining bright
Far o'er the dark Sierra's height,¹
And crag, and peak, and snowy crest,
Where the wild eagle builds his nest ;
The myrtle groves, and palms,² and flowers,
Are smiling through their leafy bowers,
And sloping hills and green-wood aisles
Are gleaming in her quivering smiles ;
And clear above, the soft blue sky
Spreads its celestial drapery,
Bespangled with ten thousand stars,
While by their sheen
Afar are seen
Angels careering in their cars,
Making the weary spirit long
To doff its frail mortality,

And join the bright seraphic throng
That sweeps along the starry sky ;
The dew begems the verdant trees,
The air with balmy odor breathes ;
Along the spicy-scented vale
Sings low and sweet the nightingale,³
Where lovers stroll beside the streams,
Lost in their first Elysian dreams,
Or there have stol'n an hour to rove
And plight anew the vows of love,
And secretly lament the wo
That bids them happiness forego ;
To tread earth's chequered paths apart,
Weary, and lone, and sick at heart.

Along Alhambra's dreary halls
Full many a hollow footstep falls
Of victim closely prisoned there
To pine out life in lone despair ;
While sounds of wild festivity,
And royal mirth, and music's swell
Descendeth through his loathsome cell
In mockery of his misery ;
And on the Vega's⁴ moonlit green,
While lingers yet the evening star

Amidst the balmy air serene,
Trip small feet to the light guitar⁵
And the low tinkling castanet,
Which ever glads the Spanish fête ;
And musically wends the rill
Along the olive-shaded hill
To mingle with the bright Xenil,⁶
And golden Darro's⁷ gentle tide,
That onward pensively doth glide—
A scene so bright—divinely fair,
That one might deem Crime lurked not there,
And War had never shook that plain,
Nor blood from noble Zegri's⁸ vein
Sprinkled the sod like heavy rain,
Nor helm nor shield had strown it o'er,
And many a brave and ghastly Moor.
But by yon dark and pine-clad hill
Hark ! to the Pirate's whistle shrill—
See ! by that rock-embattled shore
His gliding skiff and muffled oar !

III.

ALAS ! there is no land on earth
Where Sin and Crime have not had birth,

Or people who no sorrow know,
Or spot which hath no tale of wo :

The Bard, from wrecks of empires flown,
The records of the mighty gone,
Weaves his immortal wreath of woes,
And gives to death a calm repose ;

The mermaid chants her song
Of those who far beneath the waves
Are sleeping in her watery caves

Her coral groves among ;
The Corsair prowls along the shore
Where Greece lived once—but lives no more,
Save some sad pile to tell us where
Earth's mightiest, bravest spirits were ;
But slavery binds her servile chain
Where freedom held triumphant reign,
Trampling the ashes of the brave.

Proud Rome is now one general grave :
Decay o'er Egypt spreads her pall—
There Death and Crime hold festival ;
Her splendors lie in mournful gloom,
And reptiles couch on Glory's tomb.
And like those fallen lands afar,
Thine, Spain ! hath been an evil star :
Long war, and blood, and rapine fierce

Have o'er thee flung their withering curse—
Consumed, alas ! thy vital breath,
And o'er thee spread the pall of death ;
Made thee the puny despot's throne,
The Pirate's spoil, the Brigand's home.

IV.

WHERE frowning rocks repel the sea
Along Hispania's shore,
And waves are dashing heavily
Against their bases hoar,
Sequestered safe from hostile eyes,
The Pirate's sable vessel lies.

A Greek from Zante's sea-girt shore—
Their leader first the rock climbed o'er,
And stretched his eyes along the lea
To scan if there were enemy,
Or aught that they would fear to meet,
Or might discover their retreat ;
Then on his whistle softly blew
To bid ascend his ready crew.

V.

UPON his lofty brow yet age⁹
But lightly pressed its signet sage ;
Still there were marks of inward care
And grief, full many a character—
A melancholy of the eye
And mien, when there was no one nigh,
That told some treasured, hidden wo
Was gnawing at the heart below,
That vanished as a step drew near,
And gave its place to reckless cheer.
His form was cast in stately mould,
And high his brow, and full, and bold ;
His long locks curly, glistening,
And sable as the raven's wing,
Were flowing 'neath the ebon hood
That decks the Greek of noble blood.
A cloak was o'er his shoulders flung,
And by his side a sabre hung ;
And round his well compacted waist,
His pistols 'neath a belt were braced ;
And but that he was deeply tanned,
Some lineaments were on his cheek
That might the darkened soul bespeak,

And from his eye gleamed fierce command,
One well might deem he had been made
For else than ocean's renegade,
The blackest fiend that ever soared
The watery waste, or stained a sword.

VI.

His motley crew around him stands,
Prompt to obey his least commands ;
Some he enjoined to fit the ship
To make another speedy trip ;
Fresh water from the mountain spring—
Fruits, bread, whate'er they needed bring ;
And some, the sturdy and the brave,
He bid hie to the secret cave,
To bring on board their hidden goods ;
Then through the dark and shadowy woods,
Along a narrow, winding road,
In thoughtful mood he silent strode ;
Nor heeded he the tangled way
Which through umbrageous passes lay,
Until he reached a wizard's cell,
That stood within a rocky dell,

O'er which the myrtle branches made
A pendant roof, and verdant shade.

VII.

THE old monk sat clad in his hood,
And garments torn, and soiled, and rude,
His hoary beard and matted hair
Strown o'er a visage worn with care,
And brow by want and wo o'ercast,
And roughened by the mountain blast ;
For many a year his home had been
Within that cell and narrow glen ;
His drink the water of the rill
That laughed along the craggy hill ;
His bed the simple moss, or ground,
His food the fruit that grew around,
Or such as love-lorn maidens brought,
Who from his counsels wisdom sought,
Of magic spells on lovers wrought.

None knew his lineage or his land,
Nor when he first came to their strand ;
The crime or wo that drove him from
His country, kindred, native home.—

Tale of himself he never told,
Nor aught to mortal would unfold
Of his mysterious, lonely fate,
Nor why he lived so desolate;
But always friendly, courteous seemed
To those who him magician deemed,
And trusted fully in his art
To heal the weary, sickened heart.

There was no malady, but he
Could find a speedy remedy;—
The crazed could to their sense restore,
The blind could heal, the maimed could cure,
The lover win back to his maid,—
All plots of crime or virtue aid,—
Tell what had been—what was to be—
Unthread the webs of mystery.

VIII.

SLOWLY within the cell he went,
Knelt down beside the wizard's knee,
And gazed up in his face intent,
While inward grief his bosom rent.
“Father, thou knowest my misery,”

He said, " the wrong, the cruel strife
That drove me to this desperate life ;
Upon revenge I then resolved,
 Nor years consumed in wo and crime
My hate or vengeance have dissolved,
 Nor can the ceaseless lapse of time.
Often before I have been here
 Since first to hope I bade farewell,
And entered on my dark career ;
 But found thee not within thy cell,
Nor caught a glimpse of the false fair,
Or sire who drove me to despair ;
And now we meet—say, in this vale
Lives SELEN and his fair ZENEL ?"

" Yes, yes, brave Greek, yet here they live,
I saw the lady yester eve ;
She hastened here with tearful eye,
To learn her lover's destiny,
Who long hath been upon the sea,
Or, 'neath its waves she fears may be."

" 'Tis well ! no more I need unfold—
Thou knowest it all—pray, take this gold ;—
Let not thine art or power thee fail

To win to me the young ZENEL ;
It is for this I sought your shore—
It must be done, ere one day more
Into eternity has sped,”
In sullen mood stern AIZEN said.

IX.

THE wizard flung aside his hood—
A moment sat in thoughtful mood ;
And having then the plan espied,
In hollow tones he thus replied :—
“ It shall be done ; to-morrow eve,
Soon as the sun doth take his leave,
And the full moon resumes her reign,
And softly lights the hill and plain ;
With two or three of thy brave men
Hie thee in haste unto this glen ;
And I anon will lead thee where
The lady nightly kneels in prayer.”

“ Thank thee, old man ; be true to me,
And boundless gold thy meed shall be ;
To-morrow eve I will be here
With men whose courage knows no fear,”

He said,—rose—bowed, and journeyed back,
O'er winding vale and mountain track,
And rocky pass, and moor, and lea,
Until he reached again the sea,—
And there he stopped beside the ocean,
Meet emblem of his breast's commotion ;
Gazed o'er the wave with vacant view
Until his locks dripped with the dew ;
Walked up and down the breezy strand
With clouded brow and clenched hand,—
And more than once he dashed his hood
Upon the ground in sullen mood,
Ere down the rocky steep's descent
He slowly to his hammock went,
To list the billows' booming chime
Around his couch—and dream of crime.

CANTO II.

THE CAPTURE.

I.

It is the pensive, gentle hour,
When lovers breathe their holiest vows,
The nightingale sings from the bower,
And lightly dews begem the boughs,
And dark'ning shadows fill the earth,
And hushed day's giddy gush of mirth,
And every sound afar and near
Makes mournful music to the ear—
The hour before the bright array
Of stars succeed declining day.

II.

AND AIZEN hastes along the glen
Close followed by three sturdy men,
The wizard, who oft whispered low
The safest path that they might go ;
At length they reach a little lawn,
Where panting lies the speckled fawn,

And just beyond a cot is seen
Behind the tangled myrtle's screen,—
Why stops he here? What hath he spied
In such a spot at eventide,
To fix his eye, and kindle now
A smile upon his iron brow?—
A youthful maid beneath a tree,
In prayer upon her bended knee.

Her brow, entwined in pearly bands,
Is hid within her lily hands;
The white mantilla o'er her head
In neat simplicity is spread,
Her sable tresses hanging low
Beneath it veil a robe of snow,
That guards in ample folds and meet
Her fairy form and tiny feet.
Like frightened fawn she raised her head,
As she had heard a hasty tread,
And gazed around her breathlessly,
With lips apart and wildered eye;
But when she saw no human form
Along the lawn, or hill, or plain,
Nor aught a gentle maid would harm,
She bent her o'er her beads again.

Never did artist's pencil trace
A fairer or a lovelier face;
Never hath Moslem's fancy seen,
While with misguided piety
He dies amid the battle keen,
A form of such divinity :—
The full high brow—the large dark eye,
And lashes drooping languidly,
Like violet leaves o'er drops of dew,
Veiling the light that sparkles through ;—
The swan-like neck—the taper waist,
In snow-white bodice neatly laced—
The ivory arm, and lofty mien,
Surpass the haughtiest eastern queen.
Never a sweeter voice had rung
Along her own green myrtle vale—
Never a lighter foot had sprung
Over its sward and flowerets pale,
Or smaller hand touched the guitar ;
She was her brother's guiding star—
Her mother's hope—her father's pride—
Brave LYNAR's young affianced bride.

III.

THREE AIZEN like a statue stood,
In the dark shadow of the wood,
Gazing upon that lovely form,
Whose beauty held for him no charm.
How should he speak, and how draw near,
And not awake the maiden's fear ?
Nor by her shriek bring from the cot
Some bold defender to the spot ?
He clasped his brow with sudden throes—
Bent lower down beneath the boughs—
Still farther from the shadows passed—
A look towards the cottage cast ;—
Then to his men the signal made,
Who promptly issued from the shade—
With nimble step, and stealthy care,
Approached the kneeling maiden near—
Behind her sprang with noiseless tread,
Snatched rudely back her beauteous head,
Across her lips a bandage bound ;
But as they raised her from the ground,
One stifled shriek broke on the ears
Of the unwary cottagers.

I V.

AND forth they leap—the father—son—
Friends—vassals, 'long the valley run—
They seek the spot where nightly she
Was wont in prayer to bend the knee—
They find her not—oh ! fell despair !
What fiend—what villain hath been there ?—
They hear a shriek adown the vale—
Fleet footsteps borne back on the gale—
Then, as the raving tiger leaps,
The panther o'er the mountain sweeps,
The hound pursues the buffalo,
The cottagers fierce chase the foe.

The pirates with the maiden reach
Their comrades waiting on the beach—
The enemy close on their heels,
With hearts of fire and ready steels—
The armed crew—the skiff is there,
And in it they have placed the fair—
The sturdy rowers seize the oar
To guide it quickly from the shore,
Yet ere they go a moment wait
Their chief, who comes at rapid gait ;
But just as AIZEN gains the water,

Places one foot within the boat,
Old SELEN cries, " My child ! my daughter,"
Seizes him firmly by the throat,
Holds him fast with one sinewy hand,
And with the other grasps the skiff,
That with the lightning's speed from land
Forth darts around the shadowy cliff ;
And to the ship that lies in wait
To take on board its wretched freight.
And now the contests fierce begin—
Now rings the shore with furious din—
Some headlong in the water leap,
And with the boat strive pace to keep—
Exhausted sink beneath the deep,
And others rave, and curse, and weep.
AIZEN and SELEN hand to hand
Struggle upon the bloody sand—
Now on the shore—now in the sea—
Down SELEN brought him to his knee—
High in the air gleamed his bright blade—
Full at his heart one thrust he made ;
But AIZEN parried off the blow,
And nearly dispossessed his foe ;
Rose firmly with him from the sand,
Shook from his throat his iron hand,

Then on him like a tiger sprung,
His weapon from him quickly wrung ;
With the left hand grasped tight his throat,
And held him out at full arm's length,
Against a rock set back his foot,
Raised high his blade with giant strength—
“ Dog—coward—demon—look on me !
Thy murderer—daughter's lover—see !
Whom from thy door thou once didst scourge,
And unto crime and ruin urge !
Behold yon ship ! Thy daughter fair,
To be what thou wouldest spurn, is there—
Look ! 'tis thy last—thy doom I seal !”
He said, and to the hilt his steel
Plunged in the hoary SELEN's heart,—
The clustering foemen dashed apart,—
Flung his broad limbs upon the wave,—
Bid follow him his sailors brave,—
Who instantly their grasps untwine,
And to the vessel stem the brine.

V.

AND now the Pirate spreads her sail,
And swiftly scuds before the gale,

Bound onward for the Grecian isle,
All cheer and glee on board the while,
Save her whom hate and passion hold,
And whose dark fate these lines unfold.

VI.

SENSELESS upon a couch she lies,
Within that vessel's gorgeous room,
Around her falling draperies,
The rich brocades of India's loom ;
Pearls, gems, from many a foreign land,
And treasures brought from Persia's strand ;
Jewels, that queens perchance had graced,
In wild profusion round her placed.
Wines, cordials quickly now are brought,
And every remedy is sought
Which can the wildered mind restore ;
Fresh fruits a crouching woman bore,
And spread before the maiden there ;
Bathed her soft brow, and smoothed her hair—
Lingering would oft the task renew,
But at the Pirate's frown withdrew.

VII.

SENSE has returned—she opes her eyes
Upon the orient draperies,
Up from the cushions quickly springs,
And casts around a wildered glance,
Like one just waking from a trance;
Her small white hands in frenzy wrings—
“Ave Maria! where am I?”
She shrieks in tones of agony;—
“AIZEN! oh Heaven! where can I be?—
What! do I dream?—a phantom see?—
‘Tis thou!—the Greek! oh God! my fear!
Is this the sea—are these the waves I hear?
My father’s heart will break with wo—
I will not—must not further go;—
Thou wilt not—canst not treat me so!
Let—let thy ship retrace its track,
And bear me to my parents back!”

“Ha! bear thee back! false, haughty fair!
The author of my long despair—
My crime—my wo—my ruin!—Never!
Thou’rt mine, and mine shall be forever.

I sought thy hand, and would have given
 My all below—my hope of heaven
 For thee, a loved, an honored bride ;
 But thou didst spurn me from thy side—
 Thy cruel father from his door ;
 And vengeance 'gainst you both I swore.
 And since that time I've had but one sole aim—
 One thought—one wish—one all-absorbing flame—
 To punish him, and link thy life to shame.”

“ O AIZEN, spare a fate so dread !
 In mercy spare ! and thee I'll wed,”
 Clasping his knees she sobbing said ;
 “ My home—my heart—my life shall be
 Devoted, consecrate to thee.
 My father's gold—his lands are thine ;
 All, all to thee he shall resign !”

“ Wed me, ZENEL ! 'tis all too late !
 My ardent love is turned to hate,
 Nor long forbearance need'st expect
 From him thy cruel scorn hath wrecked.”

“ Fear'st not ?—my father and my brother”—
 “ Poor helpless dove ! thy threats retain ;
 They will not strive with me again,

Nor draw their blades against another ;—
Thy brother sleeps beneath the wave ;
Old Selen found a bloody grave ;
This sabre pierced to-night his breast,
And sent him to his long and dreamless rest.”

Then, quick as lightning from the cloud
Dispels the mists that earth enshrouds,
Truth flashed across her mental eye,
And showed a fiend of deepest dye :

“ O God of Heaven ! avert my doom !”

She cried, and breathless, shuddering,
Her senses faint and wandering,

Pale as the drapery of the tomb,
Cold as a marble pillar, sate
Beneath his lowering frown of hate ;
Her lips compressed, and small hand raised,]
With vacant stare full on him gazed,
Till through his veins shot quick an icy chill,
And his crime-calloused heart with awe grew still.

“ ’Tis most ungenerous—most unkind,
Yet to thy will I am resigned ;
But first, one hour to me allow,
That for the dead my tears may flow ;

Then thy dark mandate I abide;”—
Subduedly at last she sighed.

“ ‘Tis well for thee thus to submit—
One single hour I thee permit,”
He said; then, darkly frowning, warned
Her of her fate, and from her turned
And sought the deck, to breathe the air
And give all needful orders there.

•

VIII.

Down by the silken couch she knelt,
In its soft cushions laid her brow;
If ever human being felt
The pangs of hell, she felt them now.
Before her rose her childhood’s home,
Its innocence, its birds, its bloom;
The friends that there were left behind
To mourn her whom they ne’er would find;
Her father bleeding on the lea,
Her lifeless brother ’neath the sea,
And him whom most on earth she loved—
Oh! then her heart’s deep fountains moved,

And from her brow she tore the bands,
And sobbed aloud and wrung her hands;
Raised her full streaming eyes to heaven,
Implored that power might thence be given
To aid her in her agony;
Rose, glanced around her hastily,
Snatched up the light—passed o'er the floor,
Where drapery concealed a door
Whose light bolt yielded easily.
One moment only tarried she,
And then with step resolved and free,
Back to the couch returned to wait
Calmly whate'er might be her fate.

1 X.

WHAT means that bustle on the deck ?
Those hurrying footsteps to and fro ?—
A storm, that threatens sudden wreck ?
A rock, that gores the ship below ?
Some deadly foe approaching nigh ?—
Hark ! list ! that wild and maddening cry !
Again ! again ! 'tis louder—nigher !
“ Stop ! ho ! fire ! fire ! the ship's on fire !

Z E N E L.

Bring water ! ho ! bring water quick !
Clew up the sails !"—rings 'long the deck.
The minute guns boom o'er the wave ;
None—none in mercy come to save ;
But, as we in the forest see
The red blaze shooting up the tree—
From limb to limb it leaping goes,
Until one livid mass it glows ;—
The flames are coiling up the mast,
And raging in the strengthening blast.

Now shrill and loud arise on high
The strong man's shriek of agony ;
Some reckless by the hatches go,
And some as weak as children grow,
And feel how just th' avenging rod,
Then bend the knee and call on God ;
Some headlong plunging in the sea,
Anticipate their destiny ;
Or, yet to shun a watery grave,
Wrestle with death upon the wave,
In fearful grasp and agony.

Others of that ill-fated band
Cling to some slender plank or brand,
Till Death unclasps each scorched hand !
And some in their despair are raving,

Stern AIZEN still his pangs is braving,
When through the glaring smoke and flame,
With frantic bound a light form came,
With livid cheek and ghastly eye,
And brow elate, and hands on high,
Shrieking—" 'Twas I—dark AIZEN—I
That fired thy ship—'twas I—'twas I!
Thy deed is black—thy guerdon sure,
And death is mine—but I am pure!"—
Then overboard leaped in the deep,
Leaving not one to tell the tale
Of those she doomed that night to sleep
Beneath the sea's unceasing wail—
The victims of the fair ZENEL.

N O T E S .

NOTE 1, Sect. II. p. 52.

“The summer moon is shining bright
Far o'er the dark Sierra's height.”

“Who can do justice to a moonlight night in such a climate, and in such a place! The temperature of an Andalusian midnight in summer is perfectly ethereal. * * *

“At such a time I have ascended to the little pavilion called the Queen's Toilette, to enjoy its varied and extensive prospect. To the right, the snowy summits of the Sierra Nevada would gleam like silver clouds against the darker firmament, and all the outlines of the mountain would be softened, yet delicately defined. My delight, however, would be to lean over the parapet of the tocador, and gaze down upon Granada, spread out like a map below me; all buried in deep repose, and its white palaces and convents sleeping, as it were, in the moonshine.”—*Washington Irving's Alhambra.*

NOTE 2, Sect. II. p. 52.

“The myrtle groves and palms, and flowers.”

“The most singular feature in the gardens of Cordova is the lofty palm, which is seen towering far above trees, walls, and house-tops.

“The palm is, indeed, among the first objects which the traveller discovers as he approaches Cordova, and for a moment he fancies that he is about to enter some African or Asiatic city. It is said, that all the palm-trees in Spain—and they are very numerous in Andalusia, Murcia, and Valencia—proceeded from the one planted by the first Abderahman in his favorite garden upon the bank of the Guadalquivir.”—*A Year in Spain, by a Young American*, Vol. III. p. 26.

NOTE 3, Sect. II. p. 53.

“Along the spicy-scented vale
Sings low and sweet the nightingale.”

“The foliage of the trees was still tender and transparent; the pomegranate had not yet shed its brilliant crimson blossoms; the orchards of the Xenil and the Darro were in full bloom; the rocks were hung with wild flowers, and Granada seemed completely surrounded by a wilderness of roses, among which innumerable nightingales sang, not merely in the night, but all day long.”—*Washington Irving’s Alhambra*.

“About a mile from the sea, we came to a small river, skirted by silver poplars. These were merry with the music of the nightingale. This bird is always found in Andalusia upon the tops of mountains, and along the banks of rivers.”—*A Year in Spain, by a Young American*, Vol. III. p. 26.

NOTE 4, Sect. II. p. 53.

“And on the Vega’s moonlit green.”

The Vega, the plain surrounding Granada, the scene of many actions between the Moors and Christians.

NOTE 5, Sect. II. p. 54.

“Trip small feet to the light guitar
And the low tinkling castanet.”

“Sometimes I would hear the faint sounds of castanets from some party of dancers lingering in the Alameda;* at other times I have heard the dubious tones of a guitar and the notes of a single voice rising from some solitary street, and pictured to myself some youthful cavalier serenading his lady’s window. * * *

“As the sun declines, begins the bustle of enjoyment, when the citizens pour forth to breathe the evening air, and revel away the brief twilight in the walks and gardens of the Darro and the Xenil.

“Now break forth, from court and garden, and street and lane, the tinkling of innumerable guitars, and the clinking of castanets; blending, at this lofty height, in a faint but general concert.”—*Washington Irving’s Alhambra.*

NOTE 6, Sect. II. p. 54.

“The bright Xenil.”

The Xenil, the principal stream that waters the Vega.

NOTE 7, Sect. II. p. 54.

“The golden Darro’s gentle tide.”

“The Darro is a small stream running through Granada, and is the De Auro or Darra of the Romans, who procured gold from it by washing its sands. Particles of gold are still found in it; and when

* A public walk on the Vega.

Philip the Second came to Granada, the city presented him with a crown made from the gold of the Darro.—*Bourgoanne's Travels in Spain.*

NOTE 8, Sect. II. p. 54.

“Nor blood from noble Zegri's vein.”

The Zegris, one of the tribes of the Moors of Granada.

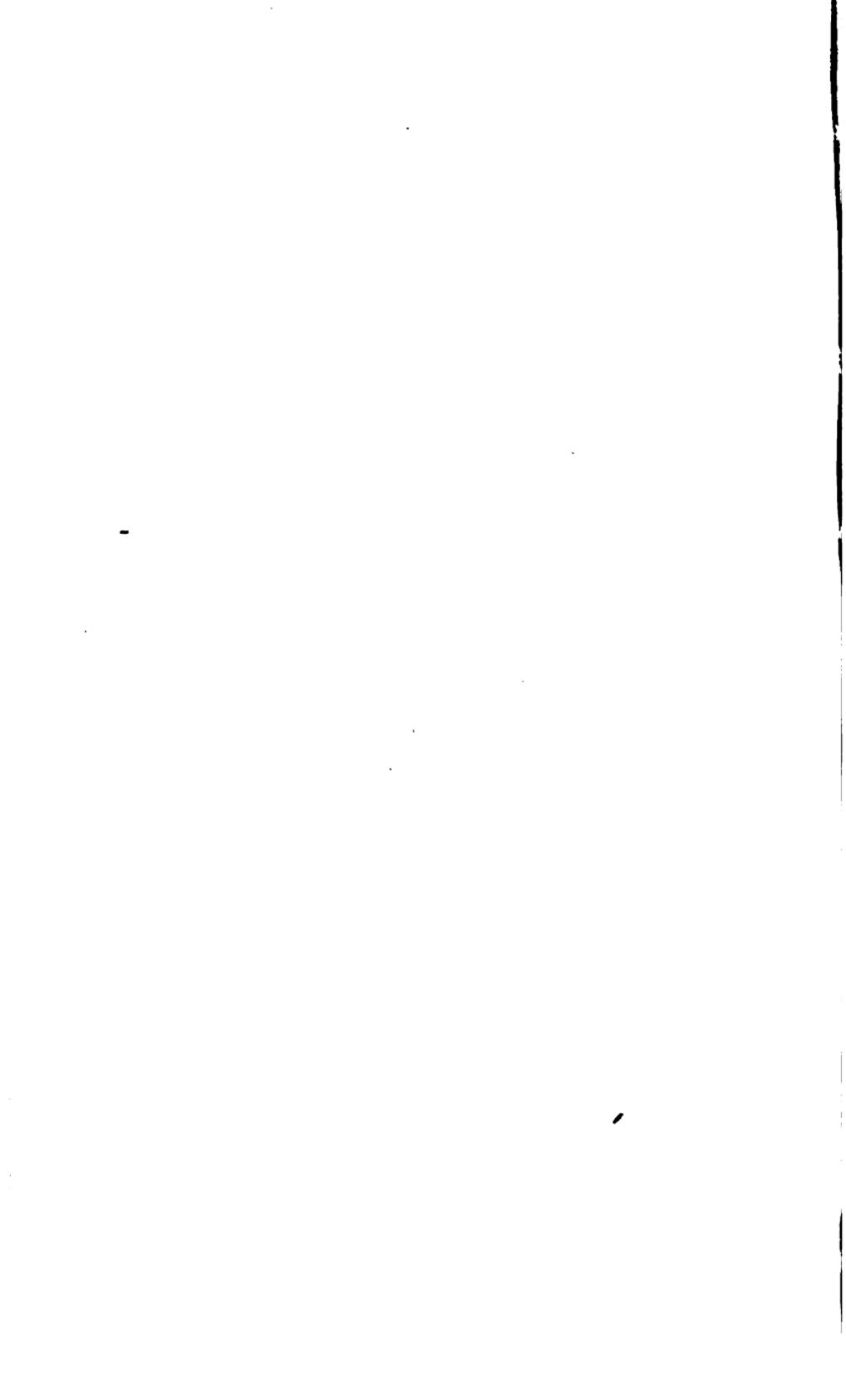
NOTE 9, Sect. V. p. 57.

“Upon his lofty brow yet age
But lightly pressed its signet sage.”

“On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly pressed its signet sage.”

Scott.

MELPOMENE.



M E L P O M E N E.

In my meditations on the genius and poetry of **LETITIA ELISABETH LANDON**, I have always associated her with Melpomene, one of the nine Muses, the presiding goddess of sorrow; and hence I have placed the following stanzas to the memory of L. E. L. under that title.

He has outsoared the shadow of the night,
Envy, and calumny, and hate, and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight
Can touch him not, and torture not again.
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold

ADONAIIS.

I.

Thou wert not made for happiness on earth,
Thy spirit nature had too finely strung
With feelings that were of ethereal birth,
To brook the woes that fate around thee flung;
Falsehood and scorn too bitterly had stung
Thy tender heart in its first vernal bloom;
The mists of sorrow like a mildew clung
Around its bud, o'ershadowing it in gloom,
And sad its moans as sighs that whisper from the tomb.

II.

HIGH-GIFTED woman ! gloomy, mournful thing !
Brief was thy voyage on life's stormy sea,
And rough, and dark, and fraught with suffering ;
Station and wealth were not awarded thee,
To save thee from the withering calumny
And cavil of those gossips who care nought
How pure the heart, or great the merit be
Of helpless victims whose fair names they blot :
Of Genius, thine was but, alas, the common lot.

III.

THY youth, thy innocence, dependent state,¹
Thy high aspiring mind, unbounded praise,
Did point thee out a fitting mark for Hate
And Envy's poisoned arrows : He who lays
His course in life's high walks, and tries to raise
Himself in being's scale, must bear the sting
And scoff of those who plod in narrow ways—
They are the brood doomed near the earth to cling,
And in despite would clip the soaring eagle's wing.

IV.

SORROW appeareth in full many a shape,²
And none are skilled to tell the whence or why
Such tears are shed—such moans the heart escape;
They may arise alone from sympathy—
Some secret, sudden blow of cruelty,
Or wrong, or guilt it may be doth compel
Her wailing victim from his home to fly,
And strive amid the camp, or ocean's swell,
Or in the sparkling bowl his miseries to quell.

V.

SOME seek from grief in tears a partial rest,
In songs, in sighs to give the heart repose;
While others hide the viper in their breast,
In silence bear the bosom's rankling throes.
The lofty soul once stung will shun its foes,
Recoil within its cell—on its own breath
There feed, and brood above its hoarded woes,
Till, like the fire-girt scorpion in its scath,
Writhing it fiercely turns and stings itself to death.

VI.

Thou wert one of that pining race who seem
Doomed to drink immeasurable wo ;
Whose lot is here to toil, and sing, and dream,
Scourged by the lash of wrong, and many a foe,
That should, alas ! their better being know ;
Whose food is wormwood, and whose tears are gall,
Along whose paths doth deadly nightshade grow ;
Who find no peace till death in mercy call,
And the grave frees the spirit from its bitter thrall.

VII.

Poor unprotected wanderers they come
Upon the earth, and raise their plaintive cries,
Their wail, their yearnings for a purer home,
E'en as a bird caged from its native skies ;
Men view their haggard brows, their agonies,
And deem them mad, or wrecks of infamy,
And lend their breath to swell vile calumnies,
To stab the writhing soul whose fame shall be
A glory and a song throughout eternity.

VIII.

AH ! hard the fate that life on such bestows,
Their wrongs an angel's tongue would fail to tell ;
Some have gone mad, and fled their earthly foes,
And sought a home afar in desert dell ;
Some breathed out life within a prison's cell,
Some, too, have cut it short in its full prime—
Death the sole stroke their agonies could quell ;
And some through tears have lit with thought sublime
Their own funereal pyre to gild the night of time.

IX.

BRAVE Ghibelline !³ thou of the sword and lyre !
Whose noble deeds proud Florence did repay
With wrong, and scorn, and unrelenting ire ;
Compelled thee her stern mandates to obey,
But could not chain thy spirit to its clay,
Or quell its fire, which dissipates the gloom
Of slander, hate, and envy, and decay,
The long oblivion of the cold, dark tomb,
And twines thy brow with wreaths of an immortal bloom.

X.

Thou next unrivalled son of Italy!⁴
The world's third epic bard—the scholar—sage,—
The Iris of thy own land's poesy,
The cloud-encircled day-star of thine age,
Whose splendors rolling centuries engage;—
The true refiner of thy country's tongue,
Though buffeted, and goaded into rage
By the stern tyrant whose harsh treatment wrung
Unto the core thy heart—thy soul to madness stung;

XI.

Who midst oppression dire, and agony,
And tears, didst pour thy soul o'er Zion's fate,
And wove a wreath of immortality
While pent behind a dungeon's gloomy grate.⁵
Albion's sad son!⁶ who fled'st her shores in hate,
And Sappho, Petrarch, Alfieri, Young!
Can ye not tell the sufferings that await
The children of the lyre; the scorn—the wrong—
The wo—that move the spirit's fretted strings too strong?—

XII.

Look back along the misty vale of time,
And scan the woes, the chequered history
Of those whose earthly lot has been to rhyme;
In cells, in garrets, and in dungeons, see
Them cooped by Want, or cruel Tyranny;
Or writhing, withering 'neath aspersions base,
The pining toys of pampered royalty,
Breathe forth their souls in songs of simple grace,
To feed the sluggish minds of many a haughty race.

XIII.

SURVEY the tribe that up Parnassus soar,
From Judah's royal Bard of Psalmody,
To Homer, Virgil, and the Troubadour,
And downward thence, the mournful destiny
Of all the mighty sons of minstrelsy;
Among them see the poor, the maimed, the blind,
Who sing for daily bread, yet are to be
Within the heart of future worlds enshrined,
And stand on fame's proud height the wonder of mankind.

XIV.

11 SHELLEY and White and all the tuneful race—
 Behold their death-bed, their untimely doom !
 In India three have found a resting-place,⁷
 From Missolonghi one went to his tomb
 How sad ! Two hapless sons repose in Rome,⁸
 Torquato fell by Este's cruel hand,
 Dark Sappho sleeps beneath th' Ionian foam,
 The immortal Dante in the exile's land,
 And thou, fair Albion's child, midst Afric's burning sand.

X V.

in 1812
 Even thy brow Genius had shed his starry beams,
 And lit within thy breast his quenchless fire ;
 Thy young heart filled with Fancy's brightest dreams,
 Whatever Hope, and Faith, and Truth inspire.
 But Fate, before whose breath must all expire,
 To ruin hurled thy high expectancy,
 The laurel tore from thy impassioned lyre,
 Extinguished love, thy soul's divinity,
 And wrung thy bleeding heart till it was bliss to die. //

XVI.

THOUSANDS have listened to thy plaintive lute,
And owned the power of thy song's witchery ;
Thousands have worshipped reverently and mute,
While came in its sad tones their heart's own history ;
Thousands have shed their silent tears for thee,
And mourned that death so soon thy lyre unstrung,
O sovereign mistress of Love's minstrelsy !
And though thy harp is on the willow hung,
Lasting as time, thy songs, like Sappho's, shall be sung.

XVII.

FOR since the burning Lesbian swept her lyre,
Gave love a language—built the Sapphic rhyme,⁹
And listening nations owned its magic fire,
Young Phaon's heart e'en softened for a time,
Alone by its imperishable chime,
Though sad and fatal proved its witchery ;
Wove the soft themes young maiden's joy to hymn,
And stamped on Lesbos immortality :
Love has no votary pure—no fervent priest like thee.

XVIII.

IN youth thy fancy feigned for thee a home ¹⁰
In sunny climes beyond the dark blue sea,
A spot where thou in future years mightst roam,
Through bright and flowery fields of poesy ;
Where sorrow, envious tongues, or misery
Would reach thee not, to break the hallowed spell :
Such is, alas ! the pining fantasy
Of minds too much oppressed, and thoughts that dwell
Too closely pent within the spirit's sickly cell.

XIX.

THUS Grief may pale the cheek, the bright eye dim,
Wo shroud in night the young heart's dearest dream ;
Life's fount with gall may bubble to the brim,
Yet Hope upon its dark and troubled stream
Will ever fling some fond and flickering beam,—
Catch from the Iris an ethereal ray,
And light the future with a cheering gleam,
Point to some goal where grief will end for aye,
And lure us to the grave with fleeting visions gay.

XX.

AND thither thou didst go, to that far land
For whose bland airs thy youthful heart did sigh ;
Around thee there the sapphire seas expand
In wild majestic sweep ; light birds flit by,
Filling the breezes with their melody ;
The clear cerulean heavens above thee bend,
So bright that one might deem nought there could die ;
Soft streams in low sweet diapasons wend,
And thou alone wert dark where all these beauties blend.

XXI.

STRANGE contrast ! mockery of thy visions high !
How sadly were thy cherished dreams reversed !
Those gorgeous scenes attracted not thine eye,
Nor kindled up thy spirit's fire as erst
Thou deem'dst, nor from thy lute in numbers burst,
To charm the world !¹¹ Oh ! couldst thou not control
Thy scorn—"the green-eyed monster" most accurst ?¹²
And fix thy steadfast eye upon the goal,
The promised, glorious home of the immortal soul ?

XXII.

It was not so ! Where roams the dusky Moor,
Where mountains upward through the soft clouds spring,
Where ocean breaks in loud unheeded roar,
Thou sat'st, like wounded bird with drooping wing,
To whom such scenes no healing balm could bring ;
The poisoned arrow left its rankling smart
Within thy unsuspecting breast—a sting
To which nor tears, nor sighs could aid impart—
A wound without an antidote in woman's heart.

XXIII.

Oh ! couldst thou bear no more of pain and strife ?
A little longer life's rough tempest brave ?
Thou who hadst known to bear—whose years were rife
With suffering—could not fame immortal save
Thee from so dark a fate—so lone a grave ?
Did that one pang exceed all other wo
So far ? To turn aside the blow, did ye not have
The power, O Spirits of the lute ? Ah, no !
It crushed love's sweetest lyre, and laid its mistress low.

XXIV.

WHAT was it ? what—that stole away her breath
 In the lone midnight hour ? Some shadowy foe,
 Or demon of the clime?¹³ What—what—O Death ?
 Not Thou, unsought.¹⁴—Her malady we know ;
 It is a common one—a common blow,
 But fell, alas ! on an uncommon heart,
 In which its fatal work is ne'er so slow
 As in one that is fortified by art ;
 Hers wore no shield, love bared it well to such a dart.

XXV.

AND wilt thou wake no more ? Oh ! ne'er again
 Wilt thou return to touch the lute's soft strings ?
 Forever hushed is that enchanting strain,
 Breathing of love unutterable things ;
 Thy spirit soars upon its radiant wings,
 The tie that bound thee to our earth is riven,
 And thou hast gone where time no sorrow brings,
 To dwell with Angels and the holy Seven,
 And in thy Master's praise to sweep the harps of Heaven.

XXVI.

THY place is vacant by thine own loved hearth,
And where are met the gay and festal throng
Thy sweet voice rises not with the loud mirth,
Speeding the soft and bright-winged hours along ;
Nor floats thy form the sprightly dance among,
As it was wont in happy days gone by,
Ere thy young heart had felt the chill of wrong ;
For thy sad doom tears flow from many an eye,
And the world breathes for thee one universal sigh.

XXVII.

ON Afric's shore there is a lonely tomb,¹⁵
Where sable maidens silent sit and weep,
And o'er it sprinkle flowers of rare perfume,
Where cypresses their shadowy vigil keep,
And mermaids chant their requiem from the deep.
A shattered lyre hangs by, unceasingly
A viewless hand its slackened strings doth sweep,
And Zephyr holds her breath, and bird, and bee,
To catch the lingering spirit's mournful minstrelsy.

XXVIII.

Yes, there beneath the castle wall she lies,¹⁶
Calmly reposing in her sea-girt home,
And gleaming white her monument doth rise,
Greeting the traveller's eye.¹⁷ Oh! ye who roam
Where nations share one general catacomb,
And love o'er consecrated ground to rove,
Go there, and kneel beside that lonely tomb,
And let your spirits drink the streams of love
And mingled sanctity pervading worlds above.



N O T E S .

NOTE 1, Stanza III. p. 86.

“Thy youth, thy innocence, dependent state,
Thy high-aspiring mind, unbounded praise,
Did point thee out a fitting mark for hate,
And envy’s poisoned arrows—”

“Unfortunately, the very unguardedness of her innocence served to arm even the feeblest malice with powerful stings: the openness of her nature, and the frankness of her manners, furnished the silly or the ill-natured with abundant materials for gossip. She was always as careless as a child of set forms and rules for conduct; it was enough for her that she meant no harm, and that the friends she most valued knew this. She thus writes to her friend, Mrs. Thomson:—

“‘**MY DEAR MRS. THOMSON:**

“‘I have not written as soon as I intended, first, because I wished to be able to tell you I had taken some steps towards change; and also wished, if possible, to subdue the bitterness and indignation of feelings not to be expressed to one so kind as yourself. I must own

I have succeeded better in the first than the last. I think of the treatment I have received until my very soul writhes under the powerlessness of its anger. It is only because I am poor, unprotected, and dependent, that I am a mark for all gratuitous insolence and malice, of idleness and ill-nature. And I cannot but feel deeply, that had I been possessed of rank and opulence, either these remarks had never been made, or if they had, how trivial would their consequence have been to me.

“I must begin with the only subject—the only thing in the world I really feel an interest in—my writings. It is not vanity when I say, their success is their fault. When my “Improvisatrice” came out, nobody discovered what is now alleged against it. I did not take up a review, a magazine, a newspaper, but if it named my book it was to praise “the delicacy, the grace, the purity of feminine feeling it displayed.” * * *

“But success is an offence not to be forgiven. To every petty author, whose works have scarce made his name valuable as an autograph, or whose unsold editions load his booksellers’ shelves, I am a subject of envy—and what is envy but a name for hatred? You must forgive this: I do not often speak of my own works, and I may say this is the first time it was ever done boastingly; but I must be allowed to place the opinions of the many in opposition to the envious and illiberal cavillings of a few. As to the report you name, I know not which is greatest, the absurdity or the malice. Circumstances have made me very much indebted to the gentleman [whose name was coupled with hers] for much kindness. I have not had a friend in the world but himself to manage any thing of business, whether literary or pecuniary. Your own literary pursuits must have taught you how little a young woman can do without assistance. Place yourself in my situation. Could you have hunted London for a publisher, endured all the alternate hot and cold water thrown on your exertions; bargained for what sum they

might be pleased to give ; and after all, canvassed, examined, nay quarrelled over accounts the most intricate in the world ?

“ ‘ The more I think of my past life, and of my future prospects, the more dreary do they seem. I have known little else than privation, disappointment, unkindness, and harassment : from the time I was fifteen, my life has been one continued struggle in some shape or another against absolute poverty, and I [must say not a tithe of my profits have I ever expended on myself: and here I cannot but allude to the remarks on my dress. It is easy for those whose only trouble on that head is change, to find fault with one who never in her life knew what it was to have two new dresses at a time. No one knows but myself what I have had to contend with—but this is what I have no right to trouble you with.’ ”—*Blanchard’s Life and Literary Remains of L. E. L.*

NOTE 2, Stanza IV. p. 87.

“ Sorrow appeareth in full many a shape,
And none are skilled to tell the whence or why
Such tears are shed—such moans the heart escape.”

It has been the fate of most authors of fiction, to be identified with their heroes and heroines, or, in other words, to be charged with pouring forth the feelings of their own hearts through such proxies. This was peculiarly the case with poor L. E. L. “ She sang of the sorrows of the beguiled, the disappointed and broken-hearted maiden ; love foredoomed, love linked to wo, and fated to death ; the hopelessness of hope, the reality of pain, the mockery of life ; and consequently was considered by the prejudging mass to be the poor, disappointed, broken-hearted, forlorn damsel which she painted ; ” and was subjected to the illiberal cavil of self-constituted critics and envious competitors. No liberal and candid mind can doubt, for a

moment, that the tender melancholy, and pensive breathings of L. E. L.'s writings arose entirely from sympathy, and a large capacity to enter into the miseries of others.

NOTE 3, Stanza IX. p. 89.

“Brave Ghibelline!”

Dante.

“It is said, that during his exile he wrote, or completed, in one hundred cantos, his immortal poem, the ‘Divina Commedia.’”—*Lives of the Eminent Men of Italy.*”

NOTE 4, Stanza X. p. 90.

“Thou next unrivalled son of Italy.”

Tasso.

NOTE 5, Stanza XI. p. 90.

“And wove a wreath of immortality
While pent behind a dungeon’s gloomy grate!”

Tasso wrote his great poem, or a part of it, ‘Girusalemme Liberata,’ in the dungeons of Ferrara, while confined there as a lunatic by his oppressor Alfonso.

NOTE 6, Stanza XI. p. 90.

“Albion’s sad son! who fledst her shores in hate.”

Byron.

NOTE 7, Stanza XIV. p. 92.

“In India three have found a resting-place.”

Bishop Heber, Falconer,* and Miss Jewsbury.

NOTE 8, Stanza XIV. p. 92.

“Two hapless sons repose in Rome.”

Shelley and Keats.

NOTE 9, Stanza XVII. p. 93.

“For since the burning Lesbian swept her lyre,
Gave love a language—built the Sapphic rhyme.”

The Sapphic verse, so named from the poetess Sappho, who was the originator of it, consists of five feet; the first a trochee, the second a spondee, the third a dactyl, and the fourth and fifth trochees. Sappho accompanied every three of these verses with an Adonic (a measure used in lamenting the fate of Adonis), which consists of a dactyl and a spondee; and in this she has been imitated by Horace, Catullus, and others.

NOTE 10, Stanza XVIII. p. 94.

“In youth thy fancy feigned for thee a home,
In sunny climes beyond the dark-blue sea.”

A desire to go to Africa was predominant in the mind of L. E. L. from her earliest years. “Mr. Maclean,” says Blanchard, “had

* Falconer was lost with the Aurora frigate, on, or not far from, the coast of India.

early made a voyage to Africa, the spot of L. E. L.'s childish speculations. Africa, therefore, was a congenial subject of conversation between them ;—African habits, African horrors, and African wonders ; the sea, the coast, the desert, the climate, and the people, even as a child such themes had attractions for her, and when they were descanted on she was a child still."

NOTE 11, Stanza XXI. p. 95.

"Nor from thy lute in numbers burst
To charm the world."

L. E. L. had contemplated writing several literary works during her stay in Africa, which was to have been three years. She dwelt frequently on the great solace which the execution of her literary plans would be to her. She said, "How deeply shall I value praise when I am away!" Her literary pursuits were to be her consolation in solitude ; but, alas ! her solitude was a deeper one than that of the green groves of Africa—it was the cold and lonely tomb.

NOTE 12, Stanza XXI. p. 95.

"——— Oh ! couldst thou not control
Thy scorn—' the green-eyed monster' most accurst ?"

"From a connection existing between Mr. Maclean and a native woman at Cape Coast, it is apparent from all the evidence, that there were things which a pure and noble-minded woman like L. E. L. is little disposed and ill prepared to bear."—*Blanchard.*

NOTE 13, Stanza XXIV. p. 97.

“ — Some shadowy foe ?
Or demon of the clime ? ”

“ The existence at Cape Coast of one, who, with her child, had formerly been its inhabitant, suggested to the minds of those who knew the hot blood and the fierce habits of the natives of Western Africa, that the English intruder at the Governor’s residence had been sacrificed to a horrible spirit of female vengeance.”—*Blanchard.*

NOTE 14, Stanza XXIV. p. 97.

“ Not Thou, unsought.— ”

“ The dreadful idea,” says Blanchard, “ became prevalent, that the deadly acid had been taken by the deceased, but not accidentally ; that, racked by many nameless griefs, beset with distracting fears of peril and accumulating trouble, the object of our affection, and admiration, and sympathy, overwrought, over-excited by the very effort to suppress her sorrows and to write gay accounts of her health and spirits to her friends in England, had swallowed the fatal draught by design. It was said so publicly, and thence believed generally.”

NOTE 15, Stanza XXVII. p. 98.

“ On Afric’s shore there is a lonely tomb.”

At Cape Coast, in Western Africa.

NOTE 16, Stanza XXVIII. p. 99.

“ Yes, there beneath the castle wall she lies.”

“ She sleeps in the barren sands of Africa, and the mournful music of the billows to which she listened in her solitary sea-girt dwelling, is now the dirge that resounds over her distant grave. She had herself predicted her own fate, though speaking in the character of another :

“ ‘ Where my fathers’ bones are lying,
There my bones will never lie.

* * * * *

Mine shall be a lonelier ending,
Mine shall be a wilder grave,
Where the shout and shriek are blending,
Where the tempests meet the wave ;
Or perhaps a fate more lonely
In some drear and distant ward,
Where my weary eyes meet only
Hired nurse and sullen guard.’ ”

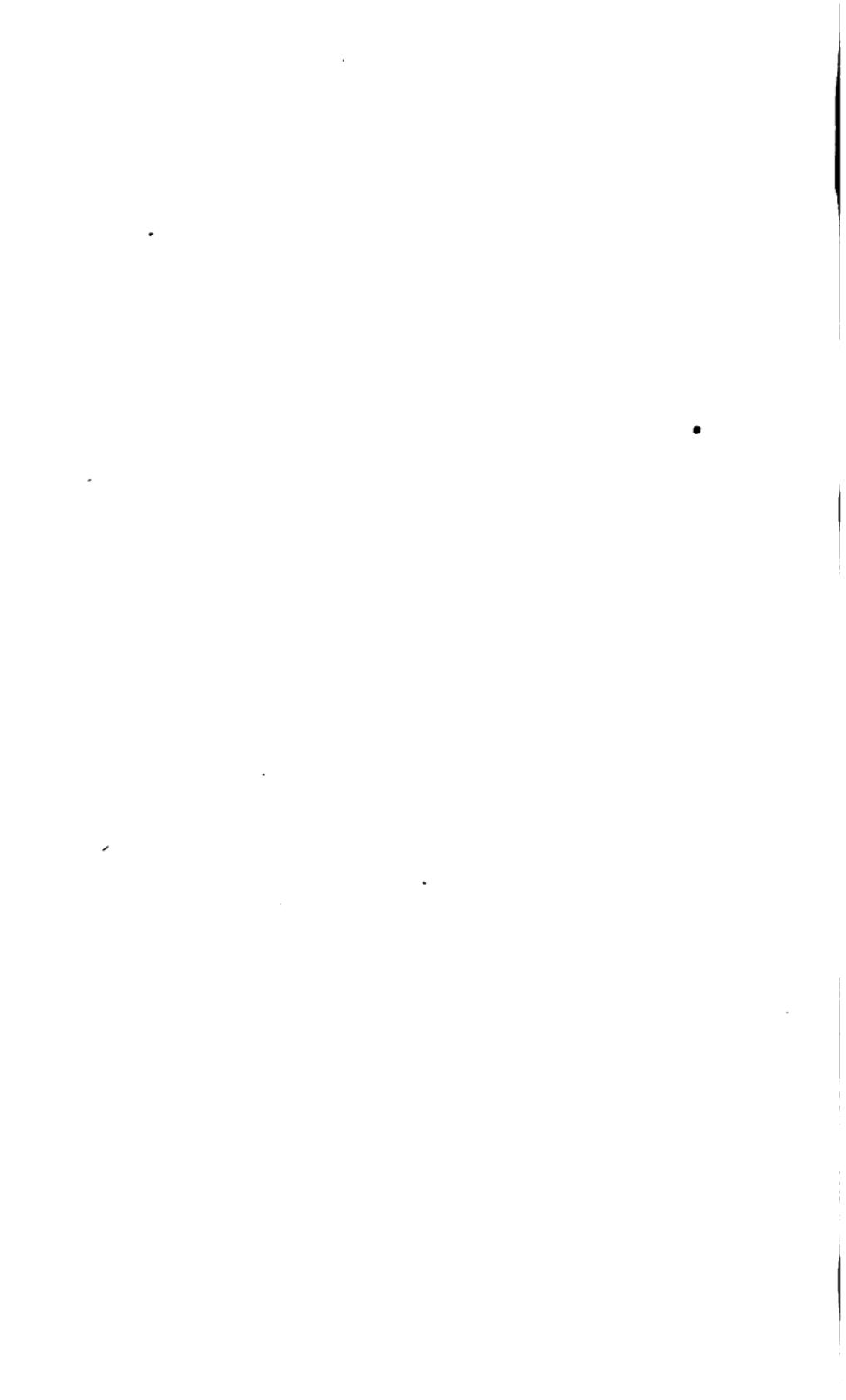
Fraser’s Magazine for January, 1840.

NOTE 17, Stanza XXVIII. p. 99.

“ And gleaming white her monument doth rise,
Greeting the traveller’s eye.”

“ A handsome marble tablet is now, it appears, on its way to Cape Coast.” — *Blanchard.*

THE LAST HOUR OF SAPPHO.



THE LAST HOUR OF SAPPHO.

THE PROMONTORY OF LEUCADIA.

This is the spot ;—'tis here, tradition says,
That hopeless love from this high towering rock
Leaped headlong to oblivion, or to death.
Oh, 'tis a giddy height ! my dizzy head
Swims at the precipice !—'tis death to fall.

SOUTHEY.

My life is in its last hour
—————farewell, ye opening heavens !
Look not upon me thus reproachfully—
Ye were not meant for me—earth ! take these atoms !

MANFRED.

I.

THE sun was sinking from soft Hellas' shore,
Yet lingering still, as if he loved to pour
His beams o'er towers and temples then sublime,
But mouldering now beneath the tooth of Time ;
To kiss the sloping hills, and myrtle boughs,
And flowers, and streams, and Lesbian maiden's brows,
As they were warbling 'long the sultry vale
Like blithesome birds, or lisping some love tale :

Slowly he sunk, while far the deep waves rolled
Beneath his fiery track like molten gold ;
The spire, and minaret from the distant dome,
And castle hoar, and fane, and royal home ;
The olive grove, the dark majestic palm,
The cypress sadd'ning in the pensive calm,
And in the liquid distance many an isle
Gleamed in his yellow beams and parting smile ;
And there the lowing herds adown the hill
Were winding to their homes by glade and rill ;
The weary peasants by their cabin door,
To their shrill pipes their simple idyls pour ;
Maidens reclining 'neath the spreading trees,
Bathe their dark brows in the refreshing breeze,
Send their wild mirth along the vales afar,
And greet with glowing eyes the evening star—
O, who would deem at such soft twilight time
Sorrow could rear her throne, in that delightful clime.

III.

HIGH on Leucadia's famed and jutting rock,
Whose rugged base doth scorn the fearful shock
Of ocean's waves, half veiled in evening shade,
Sat Lesbian **SAPPHO** all for death arrayed :

Around her beauteous form her tunic flung,
And her dark tresses long and flowing hung
Down to the rock, steeped in the briny dew,
And gently waving as the breezes blew
Along the lea. One small hand held her lute,
The other rested on its strings all mute
As they had never breathed one thrilling song
Of fervent love, or anguish cherished long.
Her swollen eyes dejected had not wept,
Though her past life in one dark tissue swept
Before her now—"I would sing one song more—
One wild undying strain ere life be o'er;
And I would gather in this latest theme
My sufferings—my heart's benighted dream,
This fierce consuming flame that racks my soul,
So that when PHAON glances o'er the scroll
I leave, my fate may flash upon his heart
Swift as from clouds the long pent lightnings start,—
Awake, my soul ! nor yet within me die !
Draw back the veil from thy deep agony ;—
And chant but one song more,—one sad farewell
To love and life :—oh ! breathe in it thy knell !
Thy requiem—a dagger make each tone—
To pierce false PHAON's heart when I am gone !"

She said ; then swept its straining chords—but fleet
As struck, her lute fell shattered at her feet.—
She gazed upon it as it quivering lay,
And felt that thus her hopes had ever passed away.

III.

UPON that melting scene, those glowing skies,
She cast around her sad and swimming eyes,
And to them breathed one silent, long farewell ;
For in her earlier years they held a spell
Upon her lute, and she had of them sung
Ere darker passions had her bosom wrung.
Turning far thence, she gazed across the sea,
To where young PHAON dwelt,—bright Sicily ;
Then her heart swelled—to every wo awake,
And beat the narrow cage it could not break—
“ Yes,—yes,—inconstant PHAON ! thou art there
Rejoicing, heedless of my lone despair—
I see thee in the laurel-grove—thy noble form
Move on,—a maiden hanging on thine arm,
And drinking thy sweet words erst breathed to me—
Forsake me, reason—thought—and memory !—
I see thee in the gay Sicilian dance,

Bending upon the fair thy tender glance;
Where jewels gleam, and where soft beauty glows;
The song swells high, the crowned goblet flows;
Thy smile—my heart's once light upon thy brow;
I see thee by a beauteous maiden now—
Love's fickle vows—thy witching flatteries hear,
As thou dost breathe them in her willing ear.
O misery! why am I thus awake?
Sad heart of mine, Oh! wilt thou never break?
There's but one remedy for such deep wo;
A fearful antidote—but be it so!
And must I go?—from thee no farewell sigh;
No word to soothe my last keen agony;
No smile to cheer me in the hour of death?—
Oh! for some power swift as the tempest's breath,
To catch my dying shriek as I depart,
And ring it as a death-knell in thy heart.

And yet I would not chide thee, PHAON.—No!
But I would wake thee to a sense of wo,
And all the misery that thou hast wrought,
And why a home beneath the waves I sought
When thou wast far away: may peace be thine!
The gods preserve thee from a fate like mine!
The quick and fevered pulse, the tears that blind,
The heart's dark void, the canker of the mind;

And if to 'parted spirits power be given,
To leave the high abode they hold in heaven,
Oh, I will guide thy footsteps from all wo,
Thy guardian Angel be while lingering here below.

IV.

PHAON, thou wast the fond reality
Of my youth's cherished dream,—the phantasy
That hath beguiled me from my earliest days,
Luring me on—the theme of all my lays,
The pole-star of my heart in grief or joy,
The day-spring of my life, my Deity !
That I might win thy love, and make thee mine—
O dream too pure, too heavenly, too divine
For earth !—I've toiled through long and weary years,
In hours I stole from sleep and life's dull cares,
And earned a laurel for my fading brow,
That will not wither like thy fragile vow ;—
Yes, I have swept my lyre through Lesbian isles,
Till it has won from kings their softest smiles ;
And royal dames have worshipped where I trod,
As there had been enshrined their favorite god ;
The proud have sought my hand,—the high of birth
Have knelt to me, as I were not of earth ;

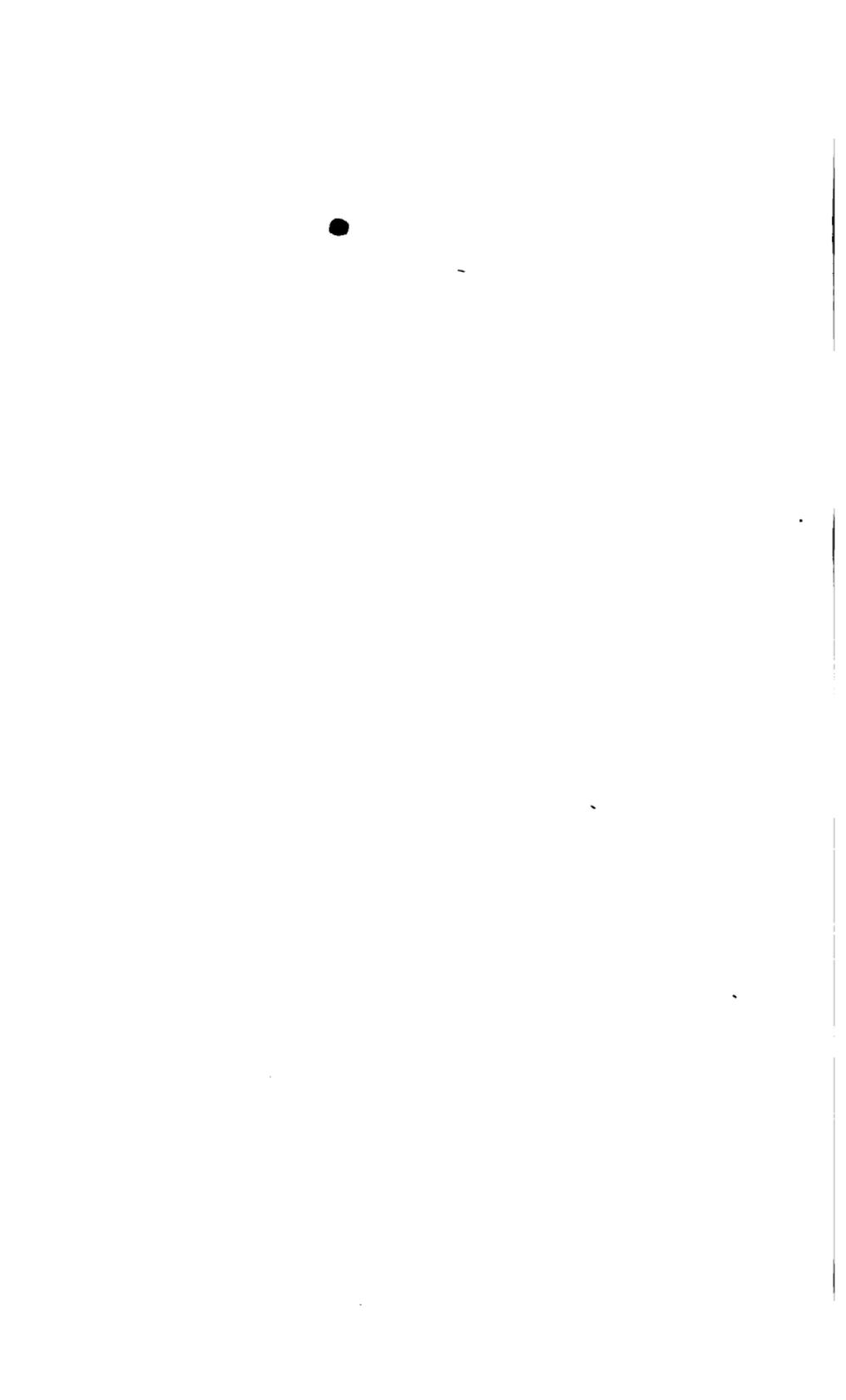
But these are nothing, since they fail to move
Thy heart, and gain for me thy constant love.
This was the die on which I staked my all,
And I, alas! have lost, and perish in thy thrall.

V.

AND now, to Thee, thou wild and mighty Sea !
Terrific emblem of futurity !
That in thy restless might dost round me roll,
And chafe thyself like my own troubled soul ;
Upon whose fickle bosom none can trace,
The pathways of the dead unto their place
Of endless rest. From blighting storms of life,
From my own heart's corroding fires and strife,—
The flame that hath no sure relief but death,
I come to seek for peace, thy waves beneath.
Ope now thy breast, and hide forever there
My lifeless form—my fondness and despair !”
She said, then drew her robe around her close,
And calmly as reclining to repose
At eventide, from that tremendous height,
Headlong descended to eternal night,
On sea-weed beds to rest in slumbers sweet,
The boundless main her tomb, the waves her winding sheet.



L A O N E.



L A O N E.

I.

WHERE a green vale wends on its flowery way,
Dividing the umbrageous sloping wood,
Hemmed in by mountains shadowy and tall,
And hills, where graze the herds the livelong day,
Or pant beneath the cool and spreading boughs,
Lonely and dim the village church-yard lies.

The tuneful birds of day and closing eve
Have sought their balmy rest—the flocks are penned—
The stars look from their silvery thrones on high,
And the full moon smiles 'mong the lonely graves,
Placid as youthful mother watching o'er
The silent couches of her slumbering babes.

!

O'er some the mournful Willow folds her arms,
And Roses drench their cheeks with dewy tears ;
While others, thick o'ergrown by tangled weeds,
Tombless, unepitaphed, neglected lie.

Along the outer walks dark Poplars stand—
Sad sentinels around the crowded yard ;
And where their shadows fall along the ground
And thrifty grass, rises the little church.

II.

WITHIN this spot are gathered to their homes
The rich man, and the beggar, and the sage,
And the poor idiot who never sipped
At learning's fount. Here babes and tender mothers,
Husbands and wives, tried friends, and youthful lovers,
Lie side by side together, yet apart
How far ! No greetings kind they interchange ;
No social converse ever here is held ;
No fierce disputes, nor tears, nor sighs, nor moans,
Nor quick'ning pulses, through these chambers rise
To break the solemn stillness of the tomb ;
But each in his pale drapery slumbereth on
In silence deep, and equally alone,
Save one, who holds a new and humble grave.

III.

By it a maiden kneels, so fair—so young,
It seems she has not twice eight winters seen ;
A loose white robe enveloping her form,
The tapering arms all bare, and on her neck,
Clear as descending snow, her long black hair
Hanging like sable drapery.

By her side

A little basket of fresh flowerets sat,
And from it she drew forth the milk-white rose,
Watered it with her tears, and planted it
Upon the humble 'grave, and bade it bloom
Above the dead—then clasped her lily hands,
Raised her pale brow and streaming eyes to heaven,
And said, in tones so plaintive, yet so sweet,
That one might deem it were an Angel spoke—
“ Forgive me, O my God ! I knew not what
I did ! Relieve this anguish-stricken heart—
This load of guilt—this agony remove :—
IANTHUS ! sorrowful hath been my days,
Since here they laid thee down—woful my nights,
And horrible the shapes that haunt my dreams.—
I knew not thou wast dear, till thou wast gone ;

I felt not that I was alone till then—
An orphan—friendless—helpless, and that thou
Only on earth didst love and care for me ;—
When thou wast here, all things to me were bright—
Kind friends smiled on me ever, as they passed,
With tender looks of approbation sweet ;
Now thou art gone, there is no smile for me—
No love ;—cold every gaze that meets mine eye.—
My troubled father from his grave comes back,
Upbraiding follows me along the vales ;
My mother's ghost frowns on me in my dreams ;—
The flowers, the birds, the streams, all—all do chide,
Reproach, and curse me for thy mournful fate.—
Oh ! I am desolate—alone on earth—
Forsaken—a wanderer—IANTHUS, oh !
I would lay down this life to bring thee back,
To hear from thy dear lips one pardoning word ;—
But wo is me !” She cried, and threw herself
Upon the sod, and with her snowy arms
The cold turf clasped.—

IV.

IT is a mournful tale—

LAONE's grief, the beautiful, the young :
She was an orphan—circumstance her fate
Strangely and sadly shaped. In her tenth year,
Her aged father from his dying bed
His white locks slowly raised—low beat his pulse,
And shook his frame, as shake the quivering chords
Of rudely-stricken lute. Upon his brow,
Furrowed and high, Death had his signet set,
And on his cheeks the tears like ice-drops hung :
Beside him stood a youth, whose slender frame,
Parched up with the slow fever of his thought,
And pale and deep-lined brow, told he had burned
The midnight oil, and drunk at Helicon.
Long in low voice with him the old man spake ;
Then clasped in his the student's bony hand,
And gazed upon his face, as he would drink
His inmost thoughts, and leave upon his heart
Impress of this his last imploring look ;
Then called the little girl, who wept aside,
And placed her hand within the youth's, and said,—
“IANTHUS, she is thine ! Poor helpless child !

She is the scion of her race—the last
Of all my family whom dire disease
Hath left to me.—

Her mother—heavenly saint!—
Ten years ago this day—the hour this child
First saw the light—died in these arms, and then,
By a contagious fever that cut down
Its thousands here, two lovely daughters fell;—
The angry sea closed o'er my only son,
And she is all that cruel death did spare
For my old stricken heart to cling around.—
I've watched her infancy—her tender years,
IANTHUS! hung around her helpless cradle,
Day, night, as she had been a priceless gem;
Have seen her grow, her youthful mind expand,
And heard the first sweet lisplings of her tongue:—
'Twould not be hard to die, at this old age!
But for my child!—Look on a dying man—
IANTHUS, look!—in presence of thy God—
While on the margin of eternity
I stand—hear this my last behest! be kind,
Be faithful to my child!—'tis a cold world!"—
And then the old man's tears gushed forth anew,—
"Guard well her helplessness!"—he faintly cried,
And upward turned his glazed eyes to heaven,

Kind blessings asked upon the youthful pair—
His icy lips pressed on their clasped hands,
Then calmly sank into the arms of death.

V.

IANTHUS with strange feelings took the girl,
With the scant pittance which her father left,
Unto his widowed mother's home, that stood
Concealed within a little oaken grove,
Bordering upon a pleasant vale, retired
And neat. Thenceforward all else lost
Their wonted influence—for aught than her
He had no thought, no wish, no hope, no smile,—
Light was but where she dwelt—life where she moved.
Music and poetry—all that adorns,
Raises, or purifies the youthful mind,
He taught that girl—ah! happy task to him,
For well his fondest labours were repaid
By the improvement of his lovely charge.
Beneath his care, he saw the mental bud
Unfold its golden petals day by day,
And beauty opening like the early rose.



VI.

At length her fifteenth year arrived—the day—
The hour, that was to make him ever blessed,
When he should to his bosom take the flower,
That his own hand so tenderly had reared
Into full bloom, was fixed ;—bright beamed his eye !—
High beat his noble heart with love and hope !—
Beautiful before him lay life's onward road—
No lowering cloud—no shadow hovered there,
To intercept its golden-tinted light—
Joy beaming on his brow, her bower he sought,
Where with her books she spent the primal hour,
To spread before her all his happy plans,
And meet sweet approbation in her smile.
But oft the brightest sun is soon eclipsed :—
Not her own grave fresh opened could have brought
Unto her heart so keen and quick a pang—
So instant stricken from her cheek its rose—
Such thought had never cross'd her artless mind.
Hers was that kind and ever-trusting love
A sister bears a brother, who hath lent
A willing hand to guard her helpless state ;—
No other felt—no other could suspect :

'Twas poison dashed upon the cup of bliss.
Speechless awhile upon the turf she sate
Abashed—her languid eyes cast to the ground—
Then on his bosom firm refusal wept.
As from a snake—as from some reptile vile,
Or fiend, that man may fear, and shun, and hate,
The venom'd arrow rankling in his heart,
Congealing the warm current of his veins,
IANTHUS from the sobbing girl recoiled.
Then cold at heart, and pale, and stern, he rose,
Folded his arms, and on her at one glance
The depths of his soul's disappointment hurled,
And strode away, with firm and hasty step :
No more himself **IANTHUS**—the kind friend,
The watchful guardian—doating lover fond ;
No more he called to lead her on their walks,
When birds had tuned their evening harps,
And filled the valleys with soft melody ;
No more he heard as erst the wonted task—
Never again his pale lips breathed her name ;
Never again a genial ray of love
Beamed from his eye to cheer her lonely lot ;
The air he breathed—the flowers along his way,
Did even of his mournfulness partake.
All day beside the streams, or mountain brink,

Or in some little hook along the vale,
His arms cross'd on his breast, and matted hair
Strewn o'er his pale and haggard brow, he strode ;
Or in some long-frequented path went on,
Torn by that wo and silent agony
That eats into the soul. Oft she would seek
To meet him in his walks, and audience gain ;
Oft in his lonely wanderings follow near,
With some kind pledge of love to bid him take.
But he would pass her aye unnoticed by—
Never again he raised his vacant eyes
To hers to greet her smile, or take the flowers
Selected from the vales to deck his room,
But onward kept his silent, brooding way.

VII.

A FEW days thus he wrestled with his grief,
Then from his barred window came the cry,—
The piteous moan—the yell—the frantic shriek,
That doth bespeak the mighty mind o'erthrown,
And reason gone—the chambers of the lofty soul
Peopled with dark and fearful shapes.—

VIII.

'Tis past!—

Silence and tears are in the widow's home—
Death hath been there.—On through the little grove,
Towards the church, a small procession winds—
They reach the open grave—around it stand,
And lay, with tears and solemn orisons,
The broken-hearted in his last abode.

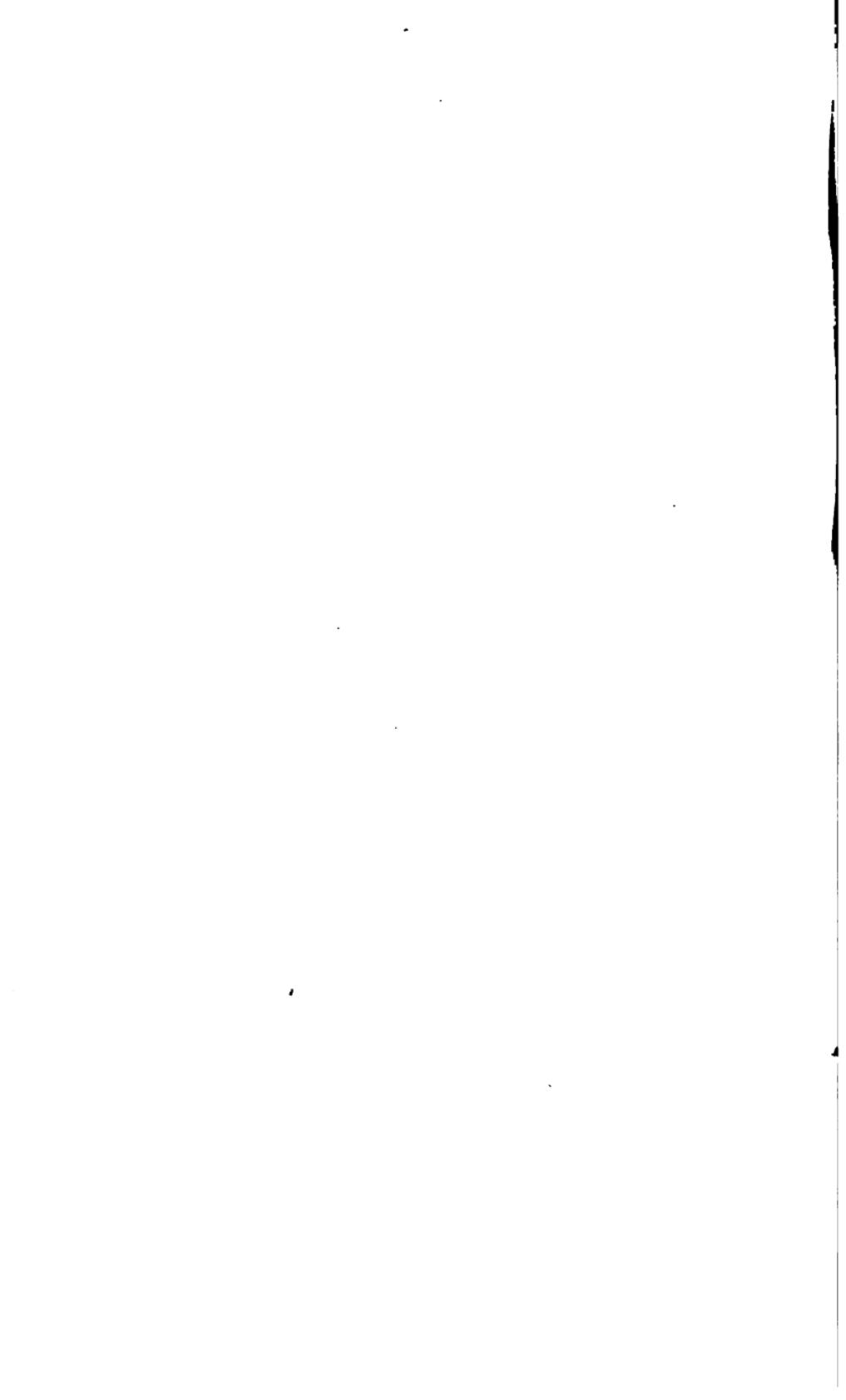
IX.

AND there, as stars look from their placid noon,
In the calm stillness of the midnight hour,
Her locks bedewed, beside the dead she sits.
Ah! what of fear recks she!—her thoughts dwell not
On earthly things—a holier flight they soar:
Morn, noon, and evening found her hovering there;
And as she pass'd, matrons, and maidens fair,
Who knew her story sad—and loved her much,
Looked on her young and fading form, and wept,
And said, "Poor thing! she looks not like herself—
Ah! soon beside **IANTHUS** she will lie!"

X.

TIME passed anon—the village bell was tolled—
Young maidens came and decked her for the tomb ;
And in white robes they bore her to the grave,
And by him laid her down to peaceful dreams.

THE BRIDE OF GUAYAQUIL.



THE BRIDE OF GUAYAQUIL.

I.

WHERE Chimborazo rears his top
Until he seems the heavens to prop,
And at his feet Pacific rolls
His yeasty tide o'er rocky shoals
 In fierce festivity ;
The lofty palms and cedars stand
In shadowy files along his strand,
And comes the reptile's fearful hiss
From chasm deep and dark abyss,
The owlet from his covert hoots,
And the wild steed like meteor shoots,
 Proud of his liberty ;
Why, on a little mound of turf,
Washed by the passing streamlet's surf,
Her garments soiled—her hair unbound,
Her brow with weeping willows wound,

A rusty falchion by her side,
Dwells lonely Guayaquil's fair Bride
 In pensive mournfulness ?
Why, in that lonely desert spot,
Where man dwells not in cave or cot,
Nor human footsteps ever stray,
Save hunter who hath lost his way,
Or pilgrim that bewildered roves
O'er rocky dells and shallow coves
 In awe and deep distress,
Midst thunder, storm, and rain, and sleet,
The blood oft oozing from her feet—
A very skeleton her frame,
Her only food the feathered game,
Her scanty roof a shelving rock,
That trembles 'neath the tempest's shock,
 Doth ever bide
 That youthful Bride ?

II.

ONE eve unto a pilgrim old,
Who, wildered, strayed along the wold,
That mournful Bride her story told.—

“ I was a hunter’s only daughter,
Who dwelt by Guayaquil’s dark water,
And early me in wedlock gave,
Unto a youthful warrior brave ;
But scarcely were we wed a day,
When he, alas ! was called away
To join afar bold Bolivar,
And help to quell the blast of war.
Week after week, and months went by,
And still I heard not of my Guy,
Nor if the war continued yet,
Which me with dreadful fears beset ;
And, tortured with the mad’ning thought
That he had fall’n, the shore I sought
One eve, and walked along the strand,
With streaming eyes and clasped hand,
Then sat me down upon the sand,
With the vain hope that I might see
His white sail fluttering on the sea.
Long through the pale, uncertain light
Across the wave I strained my sight,
But nothing meeting there mine eye,
Save water, mist, and starry sky,
My spirit wandered to my Guy,
Along the wild Peruvian plain,

Where weltering thickly lay the slain.—
I heard the cannon's deaf'ning roar,
I saw run warm the warrior's gore
 Along the battle-field,
The fearful sabre's glittering flash,
Amidst the ranks the war-horse dash
Over the dead, a ghastly sight ;
My Guy now mingling in the fight,
 Then bleeding on his shield.

III.

“ 'TWAS thus I sat in revery,
From every fear of danger free,
When a strong arm entwined my waist,
Across my face a bandage placed,
And lifted me upon a steed,
Then urged it to its fleetest speed.
Fast in the robber's grasp I lay,
As on the charger flew away
O'er mountain, heath, and winding vale,
Athwart abyss and rocky dale,
His lofty head above us tost,
Snorting as gulf and stream he cross'd,
Till sight and sound and sense were lost.

IV.

“ How life to me that night was spared—
The dangers that the courser dared—
The distance over which he flew
To reach the cave, I never knew.
When sense again to me returned,
I lay upon a squalid mat
Near which a sickly taper burned,
And lowering dark the bandit sat;
But 'twas a momentary gleam
That darted o'er delirium's dream—
The lightning's flash across the clouds,
That darkness instantly enshrouds.
It might be weeks, or months perchance,
Ere reason broke again its trance,
Or fitful ray of conscious light
Beamed in upon my mental night.

“ At length I woke—I was alone—
Alone within that desert cave,
Where I could hear but ocean's moan,
The fierce contending breakers rave,

The sea-gull in her wildest mood
Shriek from her liquid solitude.
The taper burned as heretofore
Discovering the slimy floor,
The grisly, shelving rocks above,
That might to fear a demon move—
So desolate, and dark, and drear,
They gleamed around me far and near.
At first a faintness o'er me came,
And sank again my weary frame;
My sight grew dim, and reeled my brain,
 Around me hideous visions lowered,
Mad phrenzy raged through every vein—
 But sense and reason were restored
At last. Then I the cave would pace,
Its gloomy length and windings trace,
And feel my way from side to side,
Along its dripping edges glide,
Each orifice and crevice try
That would my slender form deny;
Then by the taper's flickering ray
Backward again slow grope my way,
And fling me on my scanty bed,
My temples press, and throbbing head,
And sob till in the land of dreams

I strolled along my natal streams,
Linked hand in hand with ALI GUY ;
Or sat upon some terrace nigh,
Telling the story of my wrong
And sufferings the dreary caves among.

V.

“ TIME dragged its weary length along,
With naught the moments to compute ;
All, save wild Ocean’s wailing song,
Around that spot to me were mute—
Or stealthy steps that I could hear
In the adjoining caverns near.
A spider weaving webs above
My lonely couch, I learned to love ;
To it my long complaints would pour,
And tell my sorrow o’er and o’er ;
While reptiles with envenomed stings
Crawled round me, tame and harmless things,
Nor longer seemed they hostile foes,
But meek companions of my woes ;
And when along the ground they crept,
Aside with fear I never stept,

Nor felt I in their presence dread,
For in them oft I seemed to read
Intelligence—a power to see
And comprehend my misery.
The days—the nights were all the same—
I knew not when they went or came ;
I wept, till I could weep no more ;—
I hoped—till hope, alas ! gave o'er—
To rescue me I soon should hear
My ALI's steps approaching near.
But not a human form appeared,
Nor friendly step, nor voice I heard ;
Nor through the rocks a ray of light
Stole in to glad my aching sight.
My food was brought me in my sleep—
(If it was sleep, that came to steep
My senses in forgetfulness
And mitigate my deep distress,)—
And oil to feed the dying light,
My only star in constant night.
It seemed that they had left me there,
To linger on in my despair,
Till madness should abate again,
Or Death relieve me from my pain.

VI.

“ At last, in the extremest end,
Where I was forced my form to bend
Between the cliffs, so scant the room,
Feeling my way amidst the gloom,
Ascending o'er the crags I went
Till in the rock I found a rent—
Made by the battling element,
Or rushing bolt of rapid thunder
In fiery wrath had riven asunder :—
And oh ! I ne'er could mortal tell,
 Though power from upper worlds were given,
The joy I felt when on me fell
 In that dark den the light of Heaven.
My pulses like a courser leaped—
My streaming tears my bosom steeped—
My temples throbbed—my brain reeled round—
I shrieked—I sank upon the ground,
And crossed my breast, and raised my eyes
In thankfulness to Paradise ;
For through that scanty fissure seemed
The light of worlds upon me streamed,

Reviving hope's sweet smile again,
Sending new life through every vein,
And mitigating half my pain.
I heard the cool airs sighing low,
I felt them breathing on my brow
Like some sweet angel from above,
Administ'ring the balm of love;
And soon I thought some hunter near
Passing my cries might chance to hear,
Convey the news to ALI GUY,
Who quick would to my rescue fly,
Upon the fiend avenge my wrong,
And put to flight the bloody throng.

VII.

I SOUGHT no more my gloomy bed,
Nor sickly light the taper shed,
Save there to get the little food
Nature requires in solitude;
But ever on a rocky nook
My seat beside that crevice took—
To me a heavenly, bright retreat—
And peered out on the azure sky

Till sea and heaven appeared to meet,
Mingling in blue immensity ;
Or looked down from the towering height
Till brain grew dizzy with the sight.
Before me tree nor forest lay,
Nor mountain stretching far away
In the ethereal distance gray,
But one unbroken sheet of ocean,
Slumb'ring without apparent motion,
So dark, so distantly it rolled
Beneath that cave and craggy wold :
And there a bird would sit and sing,
The livelong day with folded wing—
If bird it was—I could not tell,
For it was imperceptible :
I could not see it come or go,
I only heard its gushing flow
Of sweetest, saddest melody,
Which made me think that it might be
A guardian Spirit from on high
Sent down to soothe my misery.

VIII.

“ At last one morn—if I could tell
By light that through the crevice fell
When morning came—above my head
I heard a hasty, heavy tread,
Then all in breathless silence hushed :—
Down from my seat I wildly rushed,
Darted the narrow passes through,
Along the gloomy cavern flew,
My soul by horrid bodings stirred,
Where former footsteps I had heard ;
And then—Oh ! God ! the sound that broke
Upon my ear, of sabre stroke,
And fearful blow, and grapple dire
Of vengeance in her hottest ire :
Faster and fiercer grew the fight,
Foe leaped on foe with deadlier might,
Till open burst a secret door,
Discovering the crimson floor,
My ALI struggling with the fiend—
My captor—once his vowed friend,
Lately his rival for my hand,
And now the leader of this band,—

And shrieking in their midst I flew,
My form between the warriors threw,—
Aghast the combatants displaced,
Who, paralyzed, a moment stood,
And all the lowering bandits rude ;
Then Guy entwined his left arm round my waist,
In clasp as strong as coiling serpent's fold,
And with the right swung high his sabre bold,
The robber's bosom fiercely, deeply cleft,
His desperate band felled round him right and left,
Till stood not one opposing foe
To bar his path or deal a blow,
As from the frightful fray he bore
My senseless form besmeared with gore,
And laid me on the dewy turf,
And o'er me flung the streamlet's surf.—

“ But stranger, oh ! the direful hour
That sense resumed its wonted power !
I would that hour had never been—
Yes, rather far I ne'er had seen
My ALI more, than woke to know
That he for me had suffered so.—
Above my form he bleeding bent,
With pallid brow and gaze intent,

To catch once more my feeble cry
Ere death should seal his destiny.
Questions he asked in eager tone,
As life those questions hung upon ;
And then in weak and faltering words,
That stirred my spirit's deepest chords,
He said—that he returned the day
Next after I'd been torn away,
And mad and frantic sought the wood
He knew to be his foe's abode,
Described him skulking on the shore,
From whence he fled into a moor,
Where he had kept him close at bay
Until the breaking of that day ;
When over pass, and mount, and fell,
He tracked him to his secret cell ;—
Then pressed my lips—O God ! the chill—
The icy pang—I feel it still !
And clasped me to his streaming breast,
With hand upraised high Heaven bless'd
That he had able been to save
Me from a lone, dishonored grave ;
Then dim and glazed became his eyes—
Late glowing warmly as the skies

That lay in calmness hushed above,
Smiling upon our hallowed love—
And dizzy, reeling, backward fell,
Gasping—‘ZIMENE! fare thee well !’

IX.

“I WOUND my arms around his neck—
I tried the gushing blood to check—
I filled the vale with hideous sounds,
Tore out my hair to stanch his wounds,
Wept—sobbed—and strove to soothe his pain—
To call him back to life again—
But all too late ! The die was cast—
Those sacred accents were his last—
To other worlds of peaceful light
His spirit winged its heavenward flight.

X.

“I GAZED upon his moveless brow,
Where love his impress fixed e'en now ;
The lips—the glazed eyes were closed—
It seemed he only there reposed !—

I could not think those lips no more
The song of love to me would pour
At eve, along our native vale,
Nor tell the legendary tale.
I pressed his cheek—its marble chill
Shot through my heart an icy thrill—
And back I shrank, and gasped for breath,
For then I knew that it was death ;
That he my worshipped one was gone—
That I was in the world alone ;
And frantic from the sod I sprung,
My hands in agony I wrung,
And paced this dreary spot around,
My feet receiving many a wound,
My garments rent, and tore my hair,—
So deep, so wild was my despair ;
And stamped my foot upon the ground,
And shrieked till Andes echoed back the sound.
And by the faithful love I bore
My ALI and high heaven, I swore
That bird, nor beast, nor gnawing worm
Should desecrate my warrior's form ;
Then gathered leaf, and twig, and limb,
And flowers, and strewed them over him
So thick that not a piercing ray

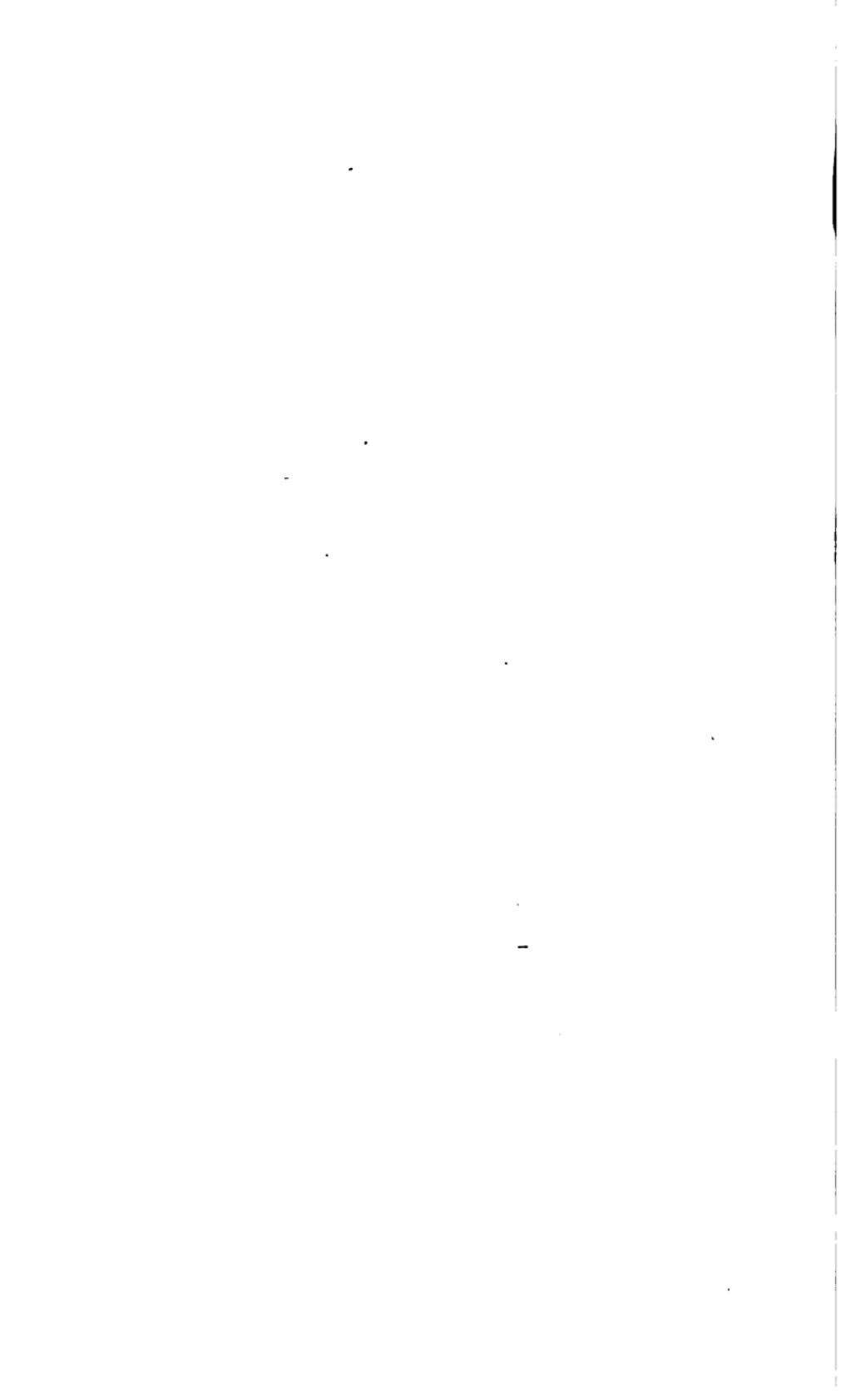
Of envious heat could find its way.
Full many a day and weary night
I watched alone that ghastly sight;
The covering rude aside would lay,
To note the progress of decay,
That every hour a deeper mould
Spread o'er his cheek and forehead cold.

X I.

“THE second day a vulture came,
Eager my hallowed charge to claim;
But with my shrieks and falchion light,
The hideous bird I put to flight.
The third a raven lighted nigh,
But frightened by my anxious cry,
Slowly again it sought the sky:
Then rav’ning wolves around me came,
With whetted teeth and eyes of flame,
Which long I strove to keep at bay,
To save from them the treasured prey;
And once I thought that they had gone,
And I in peace was left alone,
But in the night I heard their bark,
The growling pack approaching nigher—

Then from my steel I struck a spark
That instant lit the sacred pyre ;
And when the solemn task was done,
The prowling beasts had left me lone.
Turf, stones and flowers, from glen and glade,
I brought, and on the ashes laid,
With withered leaves that fell around,
Until I reared this little mound,
Where ever since in mournful mood
I dwell in ceaseless solitude ;
And here, till fate or death compel
My exit, I will ever dwell,
Midst rain, and storm, and hail, and frost,
Still watching o'er the hallowed trust,
Sole guardian of my faithful Ali's dust!"

G E R T R U D E.



L I N E S

ON RECEIVING THE PICTURE OF GERTRUDE, A YOUNG AND UNFORTUNATE POETESS.

Io sono, io son ben dessa ! or vedi come
M' ha cangiata il dolor fiero ed atroce
Ch' a fatica la voce
Puo di me dar la conoscenza vera.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

And art thou, fair one, thus so desolate ?
Of friends and hopes bereft ? thy young love spurned ?
Thy crushed affections thrown back on thy heart,
To wither and decay like autumn's leaves ?

'Tis thou ! those eyes that darkly seem to glow,
Those lips, those sable curls, that lofty brow,
And mien, and lineaments are all thine own,
Though sadly changed ; the vermeil blush is gone,
And that soft smile of buoyancy and glee,
That tell the maiden's heart is light and free.—
'Tis thou ! I saw thee in youth's giddy hours,

When thou wast bright as morning's opening flowers
In dewy May—when from those languid eyes
Bright genius flashed, and hope's sweet fantasies,
And holy thought, and dreams of earthly bliss
Each feature kindled into loveliness.

And I have seen thee in the gorgeous hall,
The cynosure of the gay festival ;
That snowy brow with rosy chaplets bound,
That graceful form amidst the dance float round,
While music all thy soul's high feelings woke,
And from those eyes thought eloquently spoke ;
When all that smiles on earth or wakens love—
The Naiad's notes, the warblings of the grove,
The voice of spring, the mellow tones of even,
The breeze of summer, and the airs of heaven,
The leaping rill that laughed along its way,
Found a soft echo in thy gushing lay.

But oh, how changed ! it breathes no more of streams,
And groves, and fairy sprites, and youth's bright dreams ;
Love's doleful requiem, hope's funeral knell,
Are now the only music of thy shell.

That mien is sad, those cheeks are pale with care—
Ah ! bitter tears and sorrow have been there—

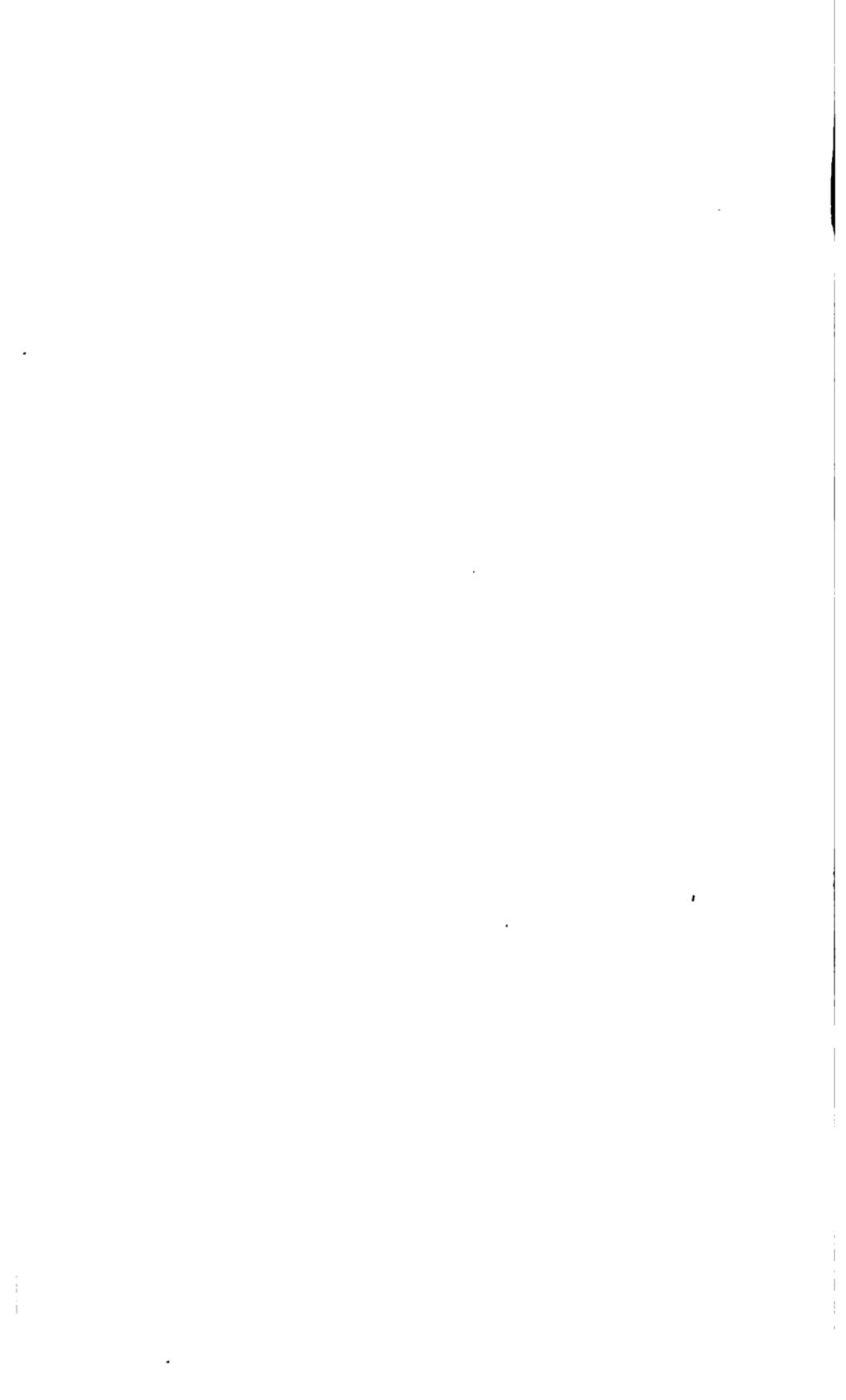
Those eyes now tell a dark and mournful tale
Of wrong and scorn, and thy young spirit's wail,
And unrequited love—dear hopes long hushed
Within thy breast—thy heart's best feelings crushed.

Time hath not on that brow etched many years,
But grief hath marked on it deep characters
Of inward wretchedness. Calmness is there,
But 'tis the calm that rises from despair—
The fixedness the features still assume
When hope and love no more our path illume,
And the embittered spirit doth await
With patience life's inevitable fate.

Thy grief is deeper far than speech portrays,
And yet upon that brow I love to gaze ;
So much is beaming in that pensive face,
Which wrong and sorrow never can efface ;
So much of meekness, and of purity,
And chastened thought, and sacred fantasy
Are there, and Poesy's undying fire,
That thrill my soul, and lofty thoughts inspire ;
And though from thee life's brightest spells have fled,
Love's halo circles not the false one's head ;

Still genius holds her seat upon that brow,
Lighting those pale and wasting features now,
As the sun's pure and ever-constant light
Lends beauty to the sorrowing moon by night. '

EMILIE.



E M I L I E .

It was a summer eve in Italy,
Starlight, and the full moon, and soft blue sky,
So tranquil, and so pensively serene,
That one might smile or weep o'er such a scene.
Calmly the Arno lay—the lighted tent
Along its banks gleamed out where myrtles blent
With citrons in a thick luxuriant screen—
Gay groups were seated on the moonlit green,
And music's deep, soul-stirring sounds, and song
Arose, and laughter ringing from the throng,
Where Florence had sent forth her bright array
'Of youthful, gallant, beautiful, and gay.'

And there moved one amidst that festival,
Fairer and gentler—lovelier far than all,

With queenly step, a soft and blushing cheek,
And beaming eyes the buoyant heart that speak.

Midst those gay scenes she walked, and danced, and smiled,
Joined in the song as blithesome as a child ;
Yet in her joyance was an under tone
Of sadness, and of grief—the stifled moan—
Untimely answers, oft a vacant stare,
That told full well the soul was absent there.

They heeded not the tear that filled her eye,
The tremor of her lip, nor frequent sigh ;
Too much each one was lost in revelry,
The timid tears of secret love to see.

At last, with beating heart and watchful glance,
She left the brilliant crowd and merry dance,
And hastened down a dim-lit avenue,
Where citrons tall and tangled myrtle grew,
Until she reached a spot where in the wood,
Muffled in cloak, a lofty figure stood,
Who forward came, took her fair trembling hand,
And led her gently to the breezy strand—
It was the gay and gallant MANLYNLIE :
Upon his arm she leant—how trustingly !

Listing those vows of constancy and love
That gentle woman's bane so often prove:
With sweetest flatteries he strove to cheer
Her spirit sad—His vehicle was near—
Around her slender waist he twined his arm,
And to it bore her light and fainting form.

And she was happy in her distant home,
Loved with that ardent flame that will consume
Itself:—Alas! 'twas but a little while—
A gush of sunlight—April's passing smile
Upon the flowers, to give them life and light,
Then leave them to the frost's untimely blight.

Time passed—where was he now—proud MANLYNLIE?—
Her young heart's dream—her soul's idolatry?—
For whom she had forsaken kindred—fame;—
That priceless gem—a pure, unsullied name?—
Alas! he worshipped one beyond the sea,
Regardless of his weeping EMILIE.

She threw her mantle on, and silken veil,
And hastened forth along the fading dale,
Nor cared how far, or whitherward she went,
So deep the inward wo her bosom rent.

Weary at last, she stopped beside a stream,
That lay before her calm as childhood's dream ;
Upon its flowery brink a moment stood,
And on the water gazed in thoughtful mood,
Placed one foot o'er the edge—then on the sod
Shrank back, and called for mercy to her God.—

And there, beneath the autumn sky, she sate,
Alone, and homeless, friendless, desolate,
Among the leaves—alas ! how like to them,
Withered and severed from the parent stem,
In silence from the earth to pass away,
Midst wintry storms, and blasts, and slow decay.
Deep penitence shook her heart's inmost core,
Till hope and strength a moment all gave o'er,
And on the turf she fell in wild despair,
Around her streaming her long sable hair,
Like a rich veil. Her sad thoughts wandered back
To innocence and childhood's faded track,
Parental love, and home ;—and there beamed yet
One glimmering star of hope that had not set.

She would return !—perhaps there still might be
Forgiveness for the erring EMILIE !—
Her wrongs, her sufferings yet perchance might melt
Her father's heart,—wake kindness he had felt

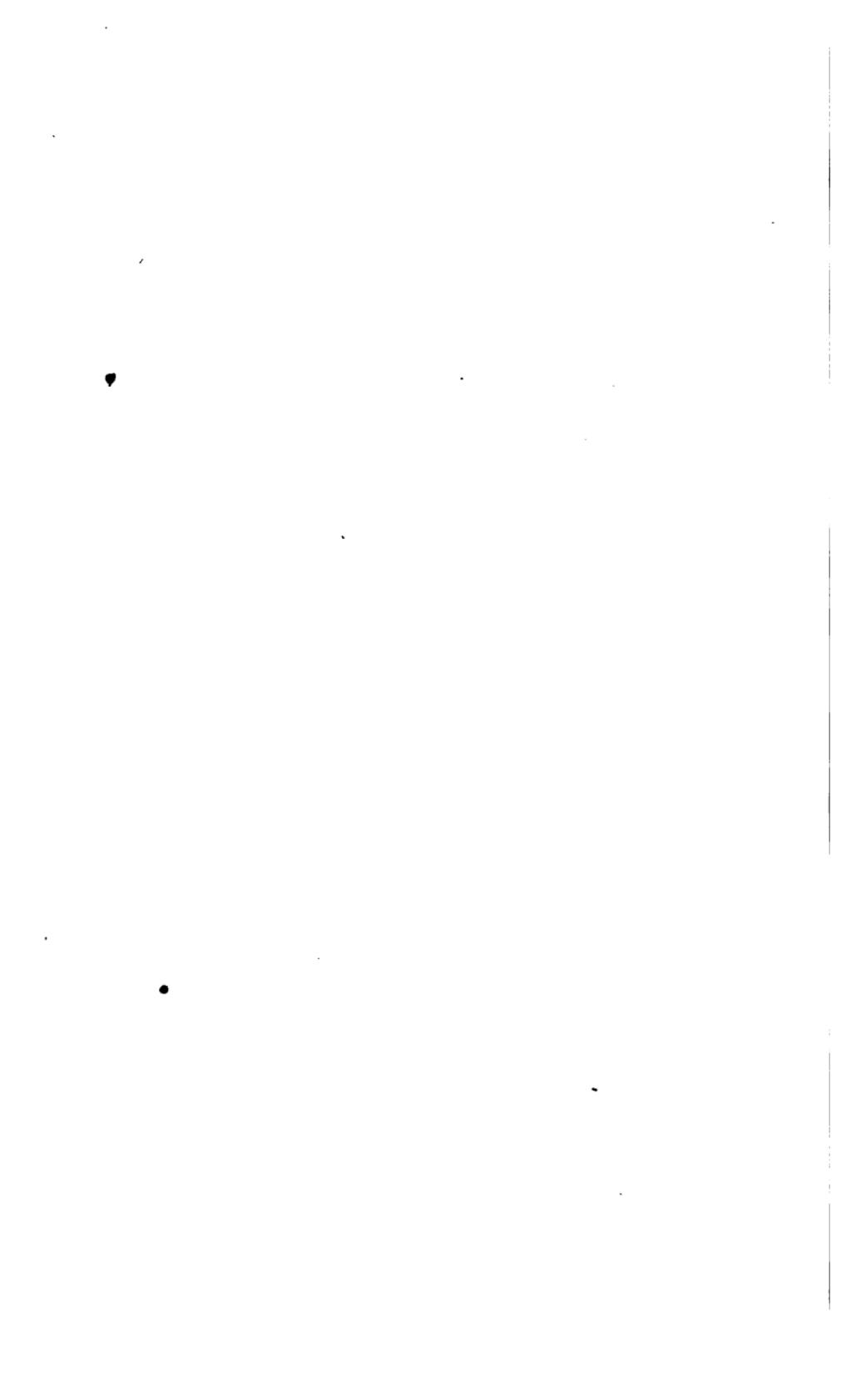
Ere from the path of duty she had strayed,
In love's delusive snares had been betrayed.

'Twas night again, and moon, and soft starlight,
When her loved home once more broke on her sight—
There was the castle, the gay walks, and bowers,
Where she had dwelt in innocence' sweet hours,
And by her father's or her lover's side,
Had moved in youthful bloom and beauty's pride.
They seemed her wretchedness, her pain to mock ;—
How could she live—how bear the pending shock !—
She clung unto a myrtle tree for aid,
On her wild-beating heart her small hand laid,
And gasped for breath.—There gleamed but one faint light
Through that old castle's gorgeous curtains bright.
She raised her eyes, and prayed for strength to bear
Her shame, and bring her trembling footsteps near ;—
She reached the door—there sat her hoary sire,
And her fair sister singing to the lyre
Whose chords 'neath her own touch so oft had thrilled,
With softest melody that hall had filled.
The song was one that she had often sung
For him in happier days—the sad words rung
Through her torn bleeding heart like a wild knell.
His tears streamed fast—for her she knew they fell,

And leaned against a post for strength to greet
Her sire—then forward sprung, and at his feet
Shrieked out—“ Forgive !”

He raised her in his arms,
Gazed on her face bereft of former charms,
And recognized his child ! Back drooped her head—
He kissed the parted lips—but she was dead.

I A N T H E.



I A N T H E.

A fearful gift upon thy heart is laid,
Woman ! _____
It is but dust thou look'st upon.
MRS. HERMANS.

IT was a rural spot beside a stream,
Kindled to beauty by the rosy beam
Of the declining sun. Fresh flowers were there,
Th' anemone and rose, and lily fair,
Imparting softness to each rugged bough,
As woman's smile unto man's rougher brow ;
And pensively and slow the weeping willows
Waved their dark tresses o'er the gliding billows ;
The warbling songsters flitted to and fro,
Delighted with their summer plumage gay ;
Sad Philomela poured forth soft and low
Her plaintive requiem to departing day ;
While rustling grove, and hill, and vale, and lea,
Were rife with nature's breezy minstrelsy.

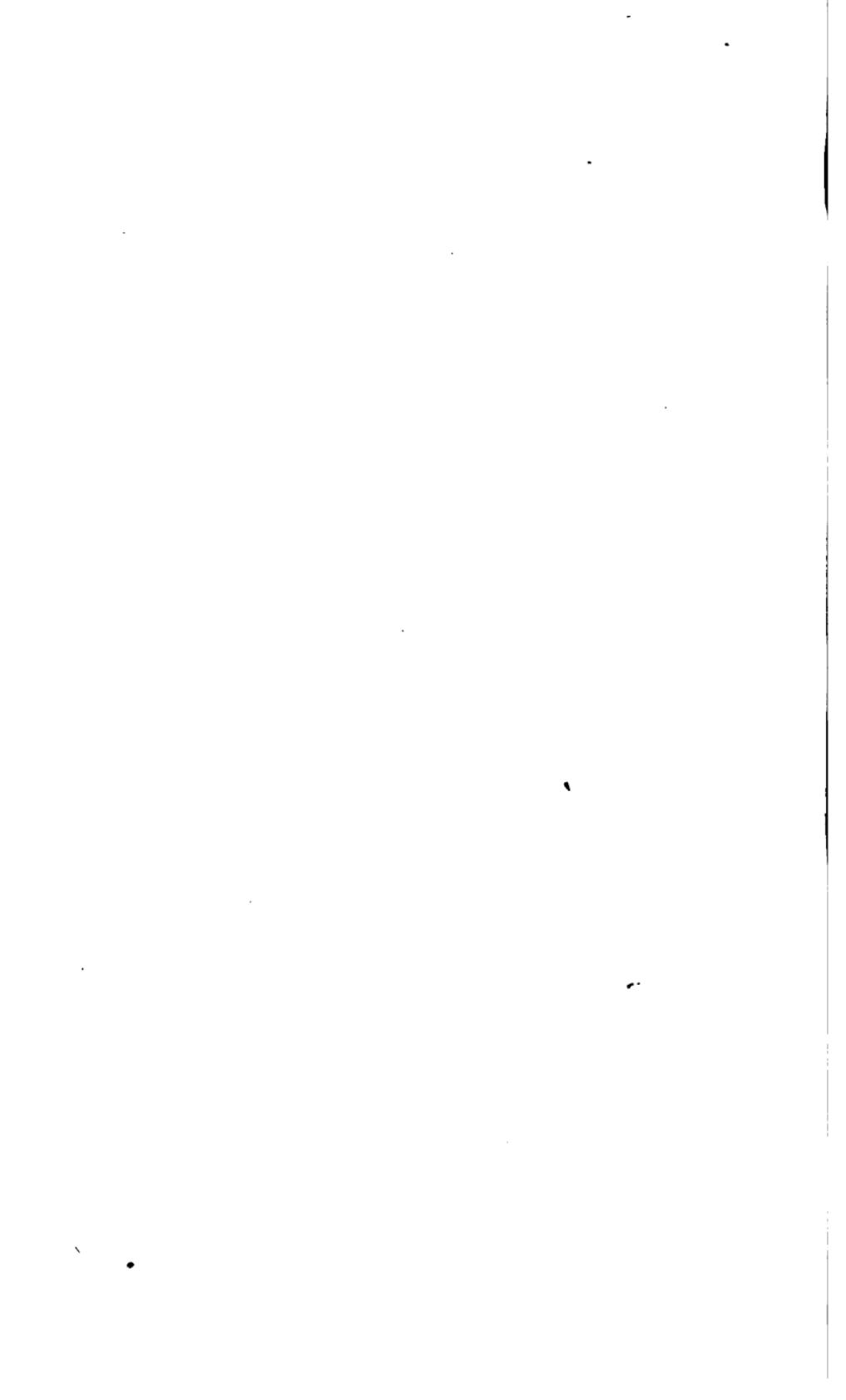
And there, unheeding aught of this blithe glee,
Or nightingale's ethereal melody,
Upon the bank the fair **IANTHE** sate,
In silent tears, alone and desolate.
Her languid eyes fixed on the limpid tide,
That by her tiny feet did noiseless glide,
As life, away. Her soft cheek on her hand,
Her sable ringlets straying from their band
In glossy clusters o'er her neck of snow,
And waving round her pale Madonna brow.

He whom she loved too fond—too trustingly,
For woman's happiness, had sworn to be
Upon that spot at setting of the sun,
To wed her ere another day begun ;
And hope, beguiling still well-founded fear,
Led her to meet her faithless **EDMUND** here.

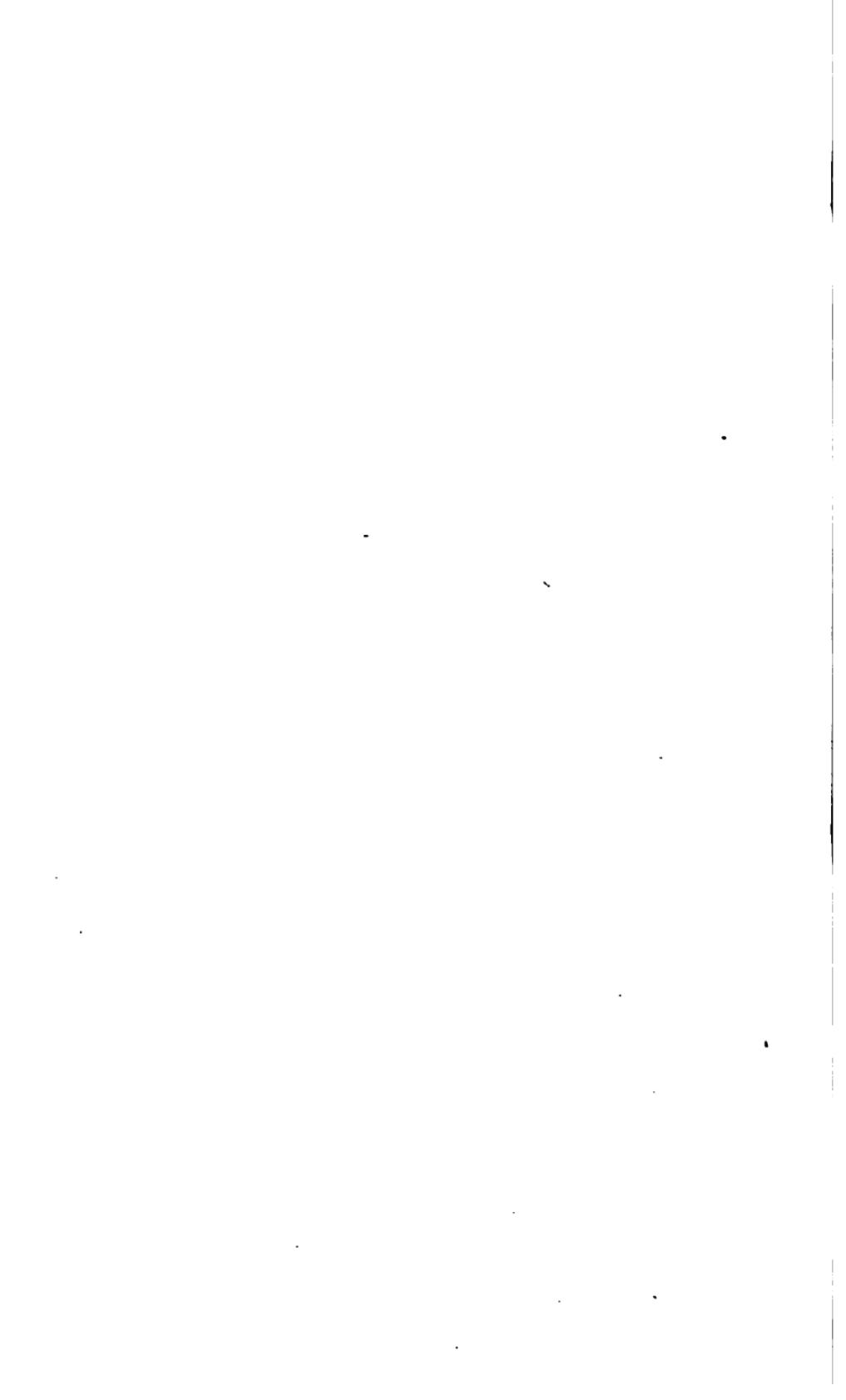
Bright stars are glittering in the midnight sky,
The moon looks from her silvery throne on high,
And yet the truant lover is not there
To call her from the stupor of despair.
Pale as a marble statue still she sate,
His coming uncomplainingly to wait.
Long hours had passed since that young form had stirred,

Or from those ashy lips one sob was heard :
The last faint accents she had uttered clear,
Were for her EDMUND words of fervent prayer.

At length, when night was far upon the wane,
From festal halls and Beauty's smiling train,
Like one on whom affection had no claim,
Unto the spot the heedless lover came ;
For well he knew that gentle, trusting heart
Would wait him till the morning star depart.
And as he nearer came, his sight grew dim,
Cold tremors shook convulsively each limb,—
He called aloud, but there was no reply—
Ah ! what reck she of life's worst misery,
And faithless man's neglect—fate's utmost woes ?
Her sleep is calm as is a child's repose,
Upon its mother's breast at eventide :
He took the cold hand hanging by his side,
Then dropped it quickly as a viper—“ Dead !
Oh, God ! pour not thy vengeance on my head !”
He shrieked, and from the spot a maniac fled.



E D I T H.



E D I T H .

I saw her on her mother's breast,
A little nursling thing,
There calmly, sweetly lulled to rest
Beneath Affection's wing.

I saw her playing 'mong the trees,
With other smiling girls ;
Like gossamer upon the breeze
Flowed free her silken curls.

I saw her in that loveliest hour,
In first sweet maidenhood,
When she was like an opening flower
With dew-drops in its bud.

And her in festal halls I saw,
Where glowed full many a gem,
With nothing on her snowy brow
But Beauty's diadem.

There with that priceless jewel she
Would bear her lofty part,
And move the queen of festal glee,
And sway the noblest heart.

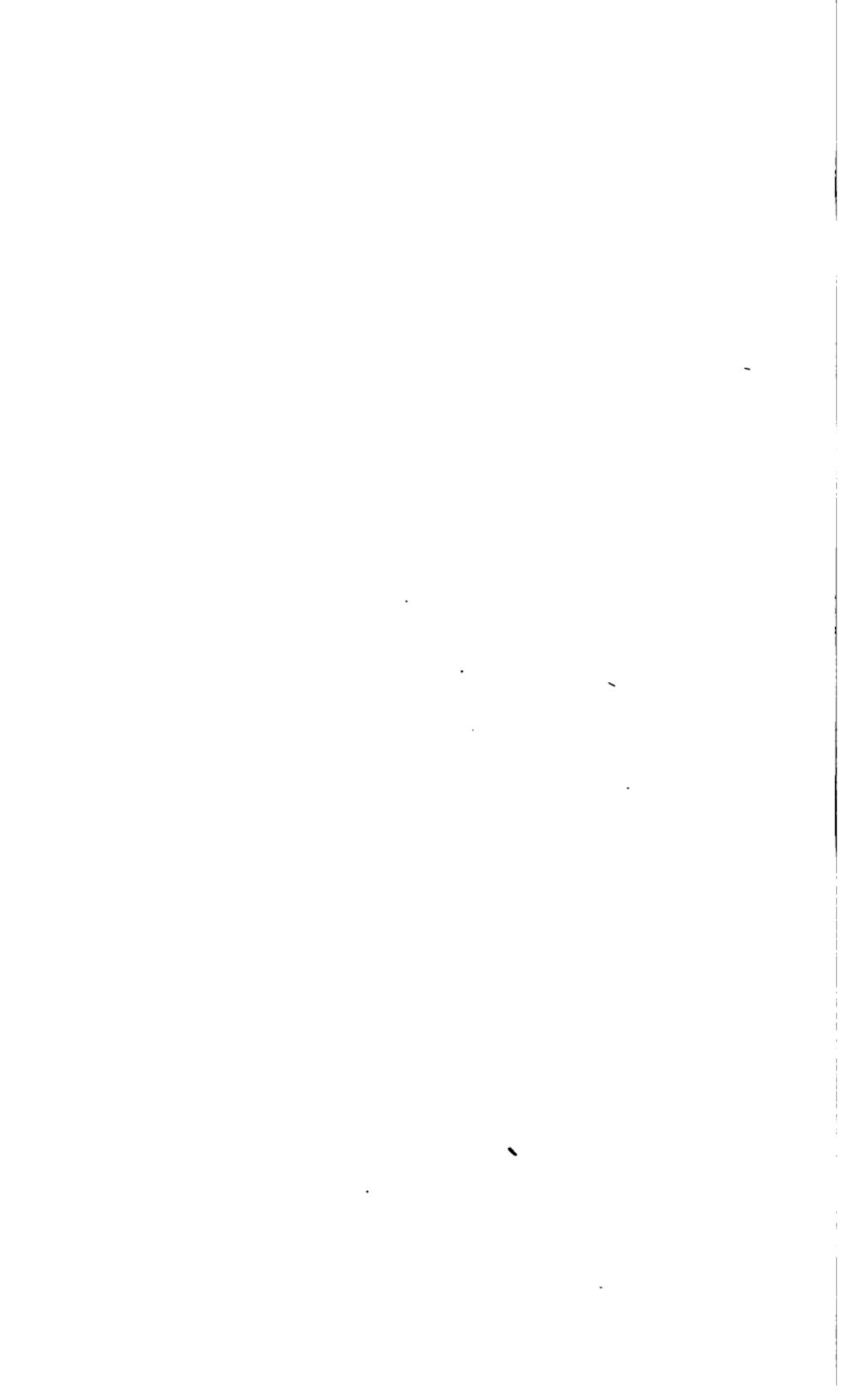
I saw her at the altar stand,
A wreath was on her brow,
With a smile she gave her lily hand
For a false and fickle vow.

And then I saw her—oh! despair—
The saddest thing on earth—
Thrown o'er her neck her long rich hair,
Beside a lowly hearth.

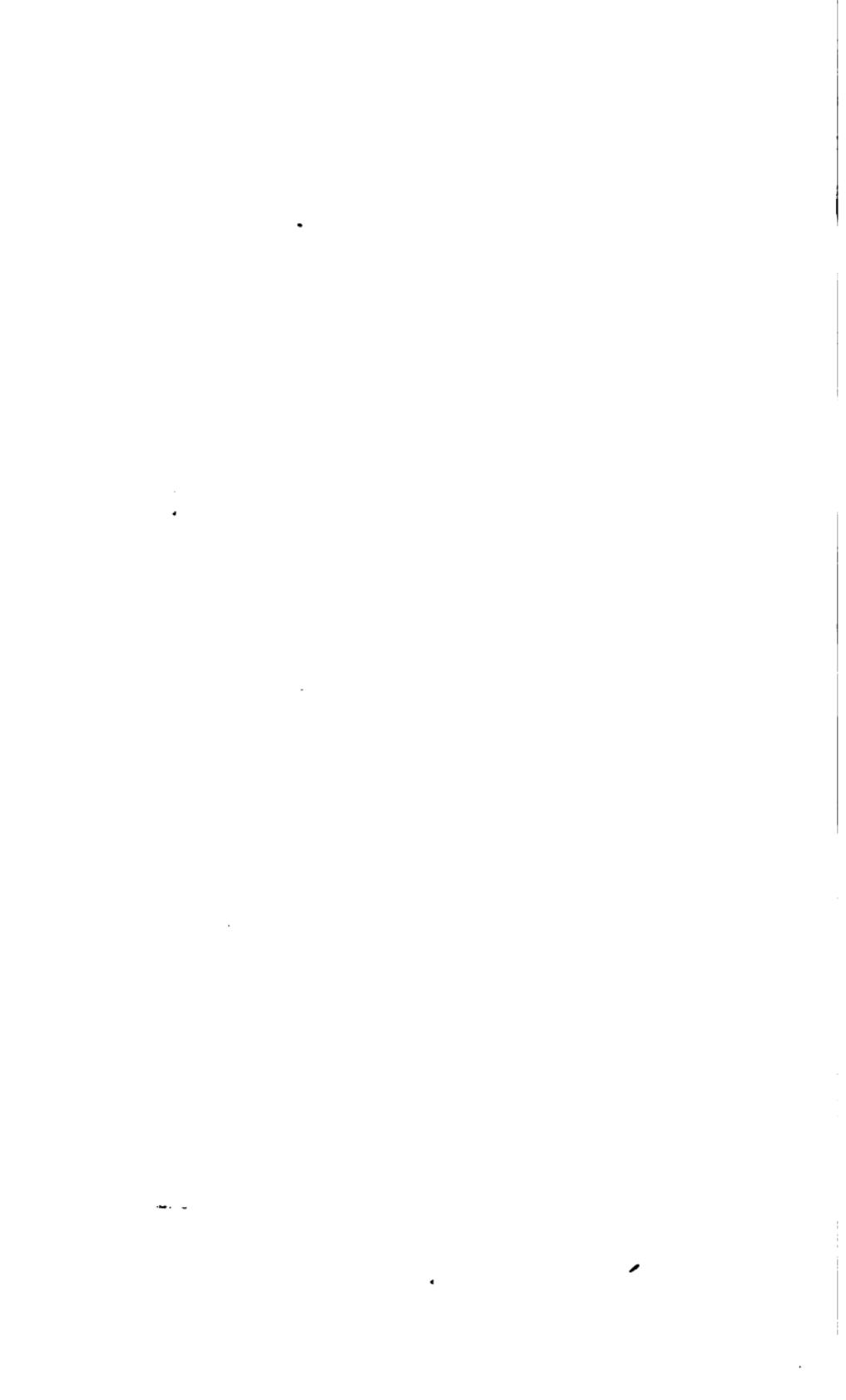
Her moaning babe was cradled nigh,
Her pale hand on it lay;
But she, to still its piteous cry,
No soothing word did say.

Her marble brow and fixed eye
Gleamed through her coal-black hair,
And she—as cold as th' polar ice—
A corpse was sitting there.

And last I saw the black hearse come
And take that lovely form,
And bear it to an early tomb,
Food for the hungry worm.



L A I S .



L A I S .

I TELL thee, death were far more merciful
Than such a blow. It is death to the heart—
Death to its first affections—its sweet hopes.

L. E. L.

But love is indestructible,
Its holy flame forever burneth,
From heaven it came—to heaven returneth.

SOUTHEY.

I.

Yes, they have said the fatal word
That bids us tread this earth apart,
Crushed every hope that life endeared,
But have not struck thee from my heart.

They bid me on another smile,
They bid me breathe another's name,
But oh! they know not that the while
'Tis fuel added to the flame.

To thee, I'll ever constant prove,
All sorrows suffer for thy sake—
The tie that binds our hearts in love
Is not for mortal hands to break.

Forever they may part us here,
Between us place the boundless sea,
It will but render thee more dear—
They cannot tear my heart from thee !

With roses they may wreath my brow,
And lead me to the holy shrine,
And wring from me the nuptial vow,
Believe my heart I there resign :

But when a few brief days have past,
And they to greet me hither come,
And find my brow with grief o'ercast,
And shadows dwelling in my home—

Ah ! then they'll watch my silent wo,
My fading cheek, and wasting form,
And glittering pomp around me throw,
But find it hath for me no charm ;—

And speak kind words—but speak in vain,
And try with smiles, and mirth, and song,
To brink back cheerfulness again,
And mitigate their cruel wrong.

But hot tears stealing from mine eye,
The hectic deep'ning on my cheek,
The hollow moan, and broken sigh,
Their fatal work too late will speak.

II.

MY LOVE FOR THEE.

A SONG.

My love for thee was not of earth,
'Twas fraught with that celestial zeal,
That ne'er in coarser souls hath birth,
That none but heavenward spirits feel ;
It flung around my soul a spell
That ne'er can die with earth's farewell.

It filled my mind with purer themes,
It taught me language erst unknown,
Gave loftier flight to fancy's dreams,
My lute inspired with sweeter tone ;

And flung around my soul a spell
That ne'er can die with earth's farewell

It shed below a holier light
Than ever sun or star hath given,
It rent the films that veiled my sight,
Forever linked my thoughts with heaven ;
And flung around my soul a spell
That ne'er can die with earth's farewell.

III.

I M P R O M P T U
ON BEING ASKED "WHY THIS GLOOM?"

Ask not, alas ! whence is this gloom,
This dark cloud on my brow,
Why fadeth thus my cheek's fresh bloom,
Or why so pensive now.

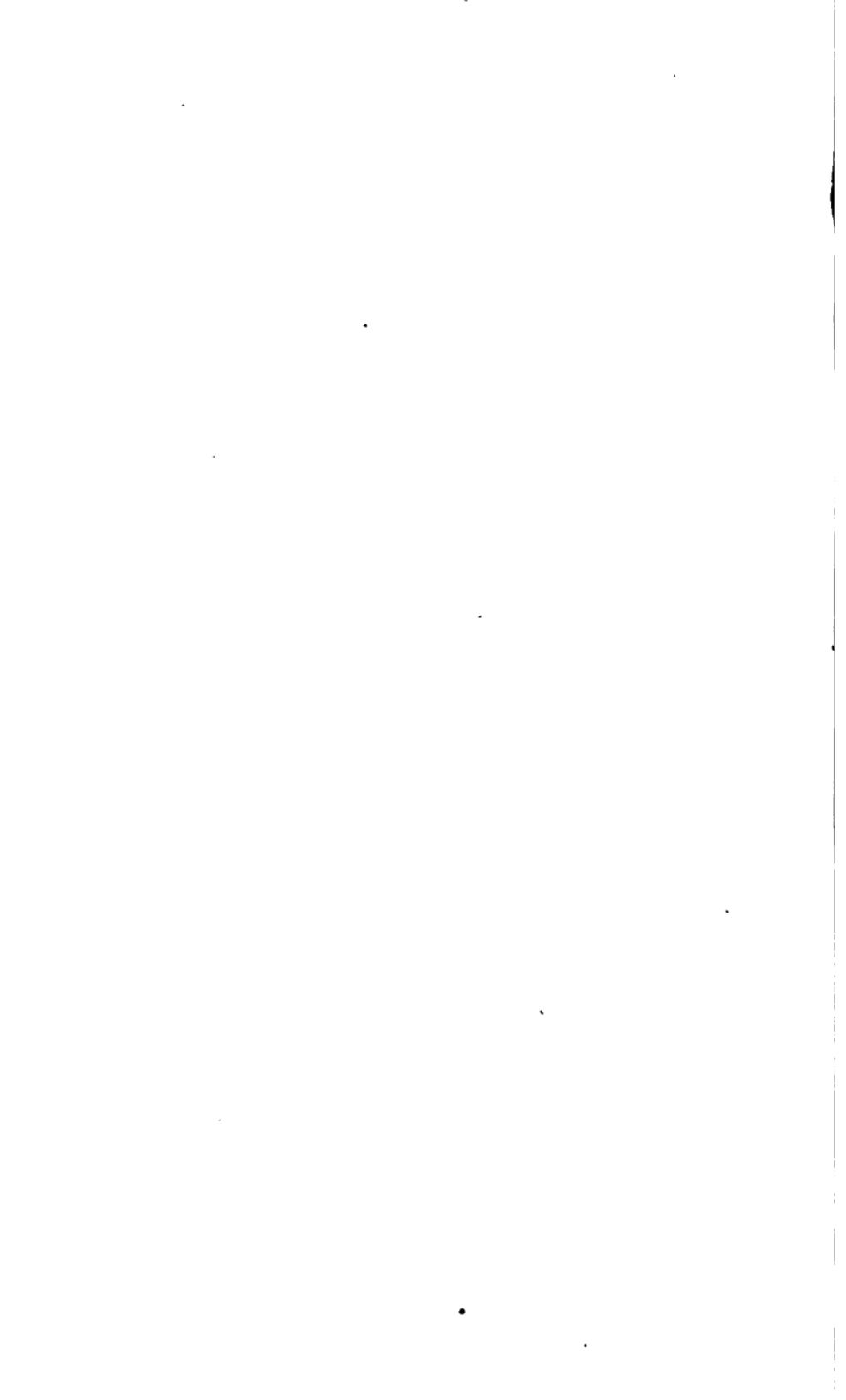
Ask not, dear friend, why steal the tears
In silence from mine eye,
Why anguish in my look appears,
Or why so oft I sigh ;—

For there are woes too deep for speech,
Feelings too finely strung
For human sympathy to reach,
Sorrows that have no tongue.

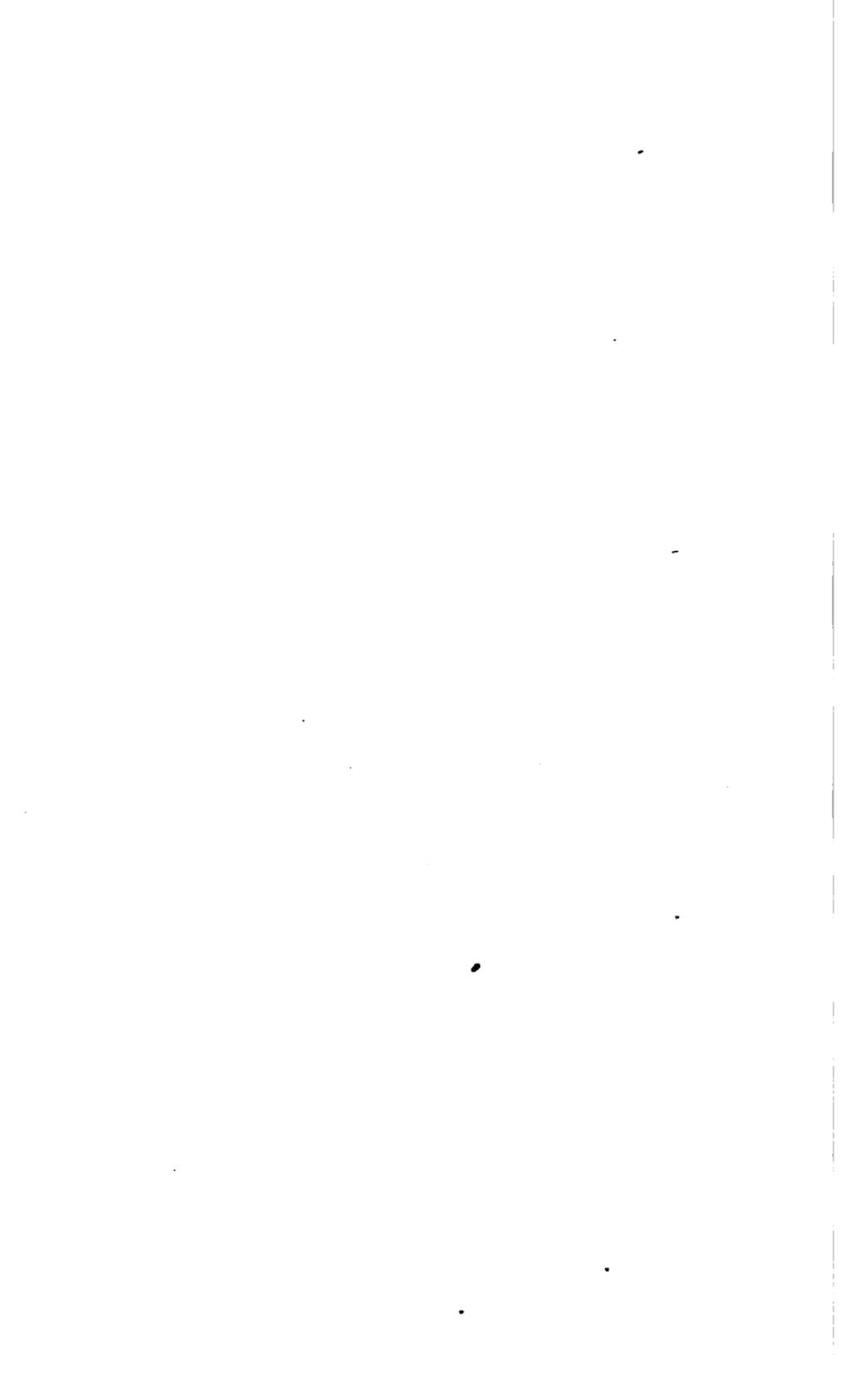
IV.

THE HEART'S WORST PANG.

It is a wo beyond all other woes,
A canker over which the heart may close,
But cannot heal. A gnawing worm, whose tooth
Saps in the bud the flowerets of life's youth,
And makes the heart a ruin—a lone waste
Where only spring the weeds of bitterness—
An aspic coiled around the cup of bliss,
Whose sparkling draughts, alas! we dare not taste!
The deepest sorrow that stern Fate can bring
In all her catalogue of suffering:
An eating rust—the spirit's direst pain,
To love—adore—and be beloved again,
Yet know between us lies a gulf that ever
Our forms, our hopes, our destinies must sever.



THE MISANTHROPE.



T H E M I S A N T H R O P E.

ADOWN a narrow winding vale,
His thin locks waving in the gale,
High on a jutting crag he sate
Brooding upon his weary fate,
While woes perchance we may not tell—
Or fancy, did his bosom swell,
As on the moaning element
These words in piteous tones he sent :

“ Away—away—ye pangs of wo,
Distract no more this throbbing brain,
My heart with brighter hopes shall glow,
And freer beat each pulse and vein :

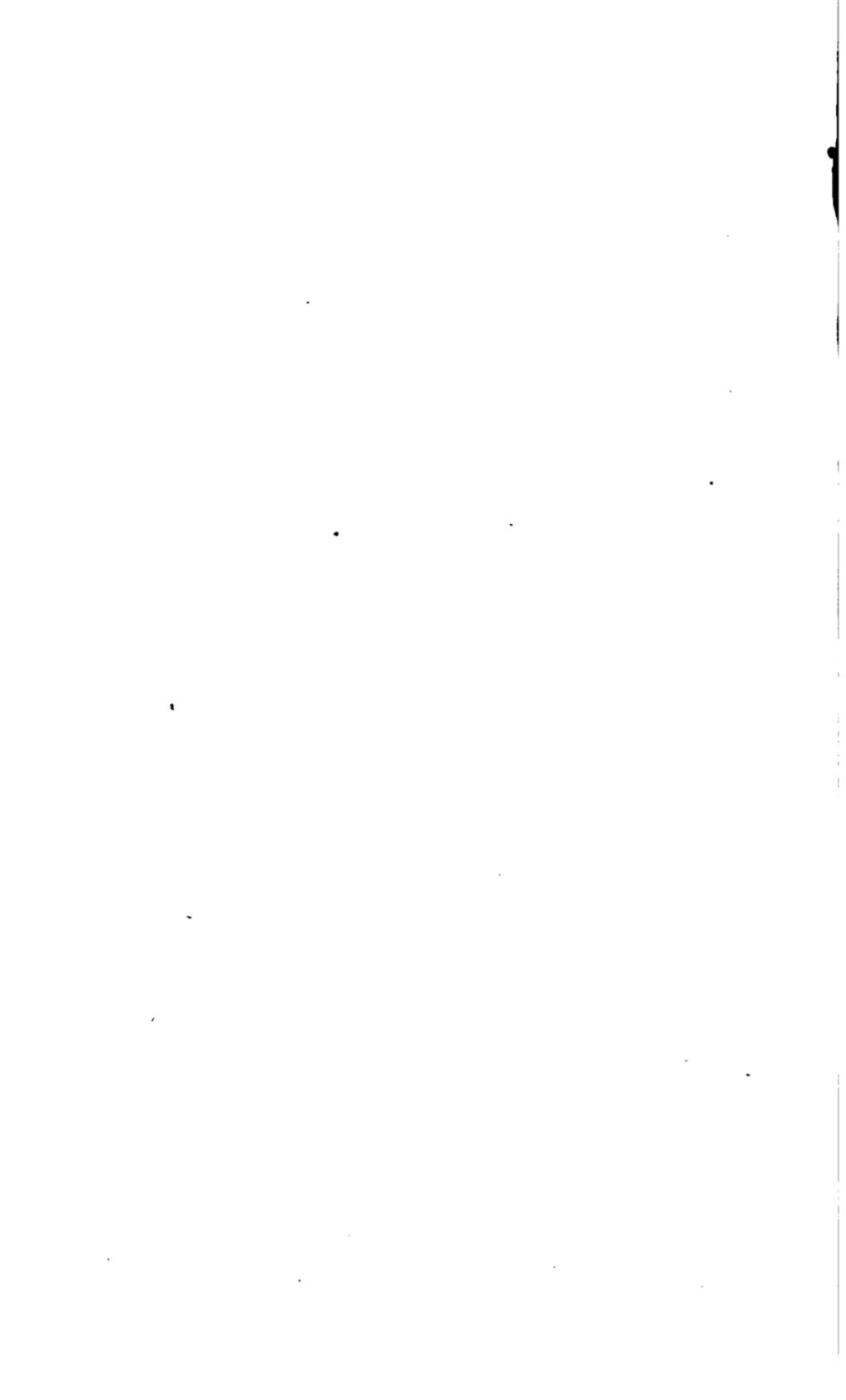
**Long have I been thy servile prey,
O Grief! and worshipped at thy shrine;
But now from thee I'll flee away,
And in the giddy circle shine.**

**" No more I'll court gray solitude,
No more to gloomy thoughts give way,
No more o'er human sorrows brood,
Nor shun the youthful circle gay :
No more I'll seek this lonely dell,
To give my stricken heart relief,
Midst blither scenes henceforth to dwell,
I'll bid a long farewell to Grief.**

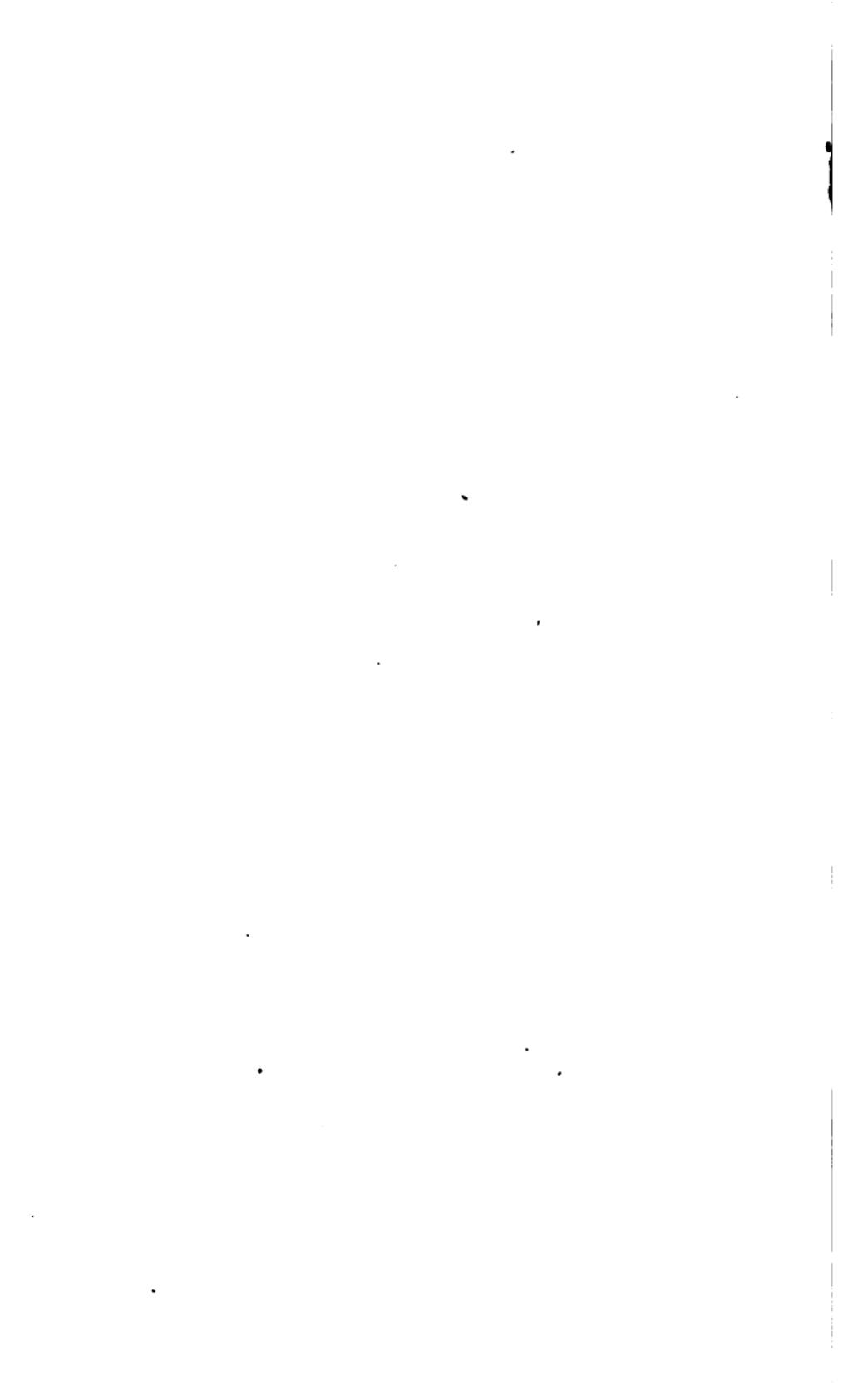
**" O Sorrow! had I known ere this,
To steel my breast against thy dart,
I had not felt such wretchedness,
I had not borne a broken heart;
My days had not so sadly past,
My nights have rolled so darkly by,
These clouds had not my brow o'ercast,
Nor yet my soul had learned to sigh :**

**" And though youth's buoyancy has fled,
And life's best, brightest years have sped,**

My pulse is low, my frame is weak,
And bitter grief hath dimmed my cheek,
Without one friend to hear my wo
Or speak one word to soothe my pain—
I'll stop these burning tears that flow,
And seek the busy world again."



THE FORSAKEN.



THE FORSAKEN.

IT hath been said—for all who die
There is a tear ;
Some pining, bleeding heart to sigh
O'er every bier :—
But in that hour of pain and dread,
Who will draw near
Around my humble couch and shed
One farewell tear ?

Who watch life's last dim parting ray
In deep despair,
And soothe my spirit on its way
With holy prayer ?

What mourner round my bier will come
‘In weeds of wo,’
And follow me to my long home—
Solemn and slow?

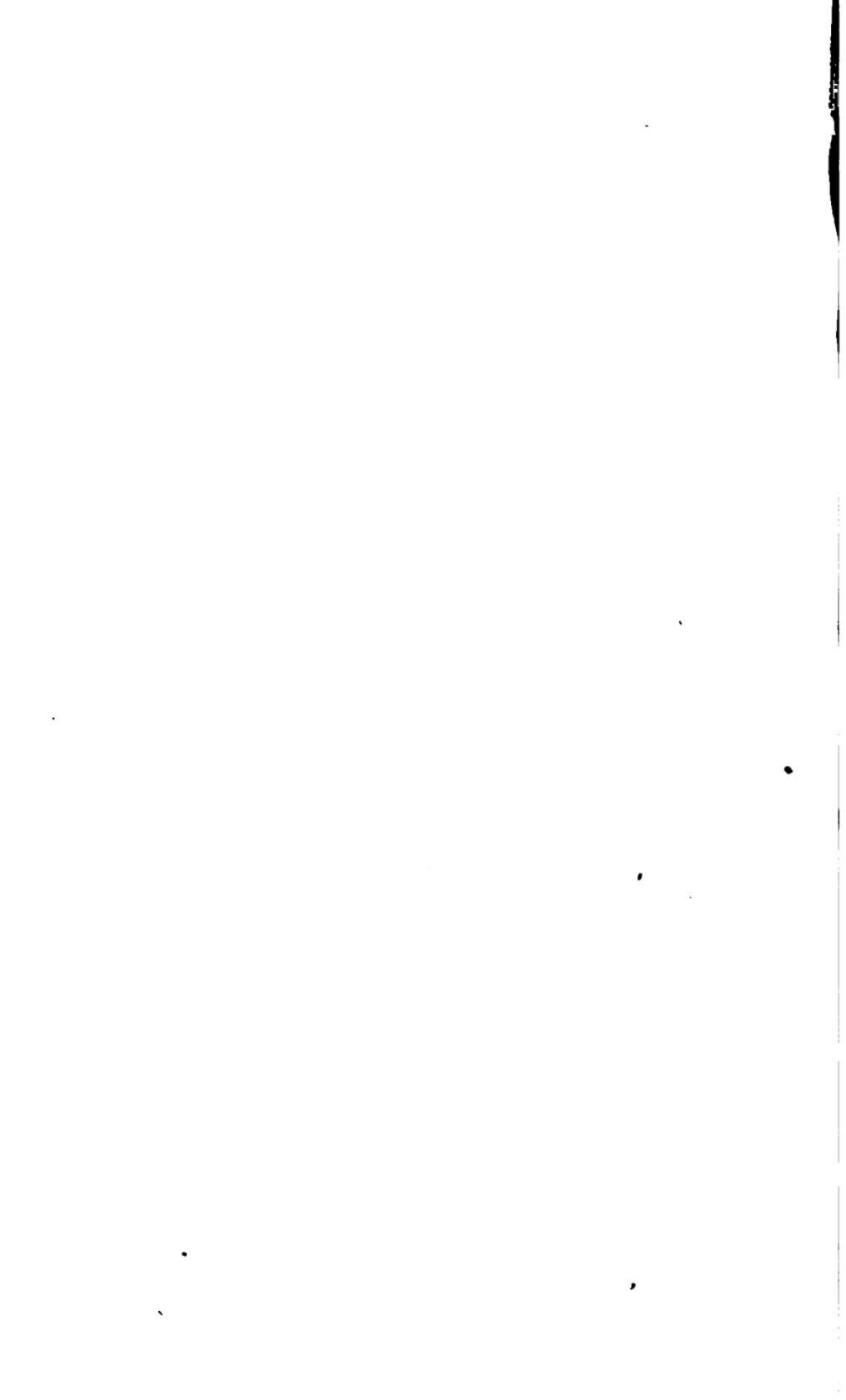
When lying on my clayey bed,
In icy sleep,
Who there by pure affection led
Will come and weep;
By the pale moon implant the rose
Upon my breast,
And bid it cheer my dark repose,
My lowly rest?

Could I but know when I am sleeping
Low in the ground,
One faithful heart would there be keeping
Watch all night round,
As if some gem lay shrined beneath
That sod’s cold gloom,
’Twould mitigate the pangs of death,
And light the tomb.

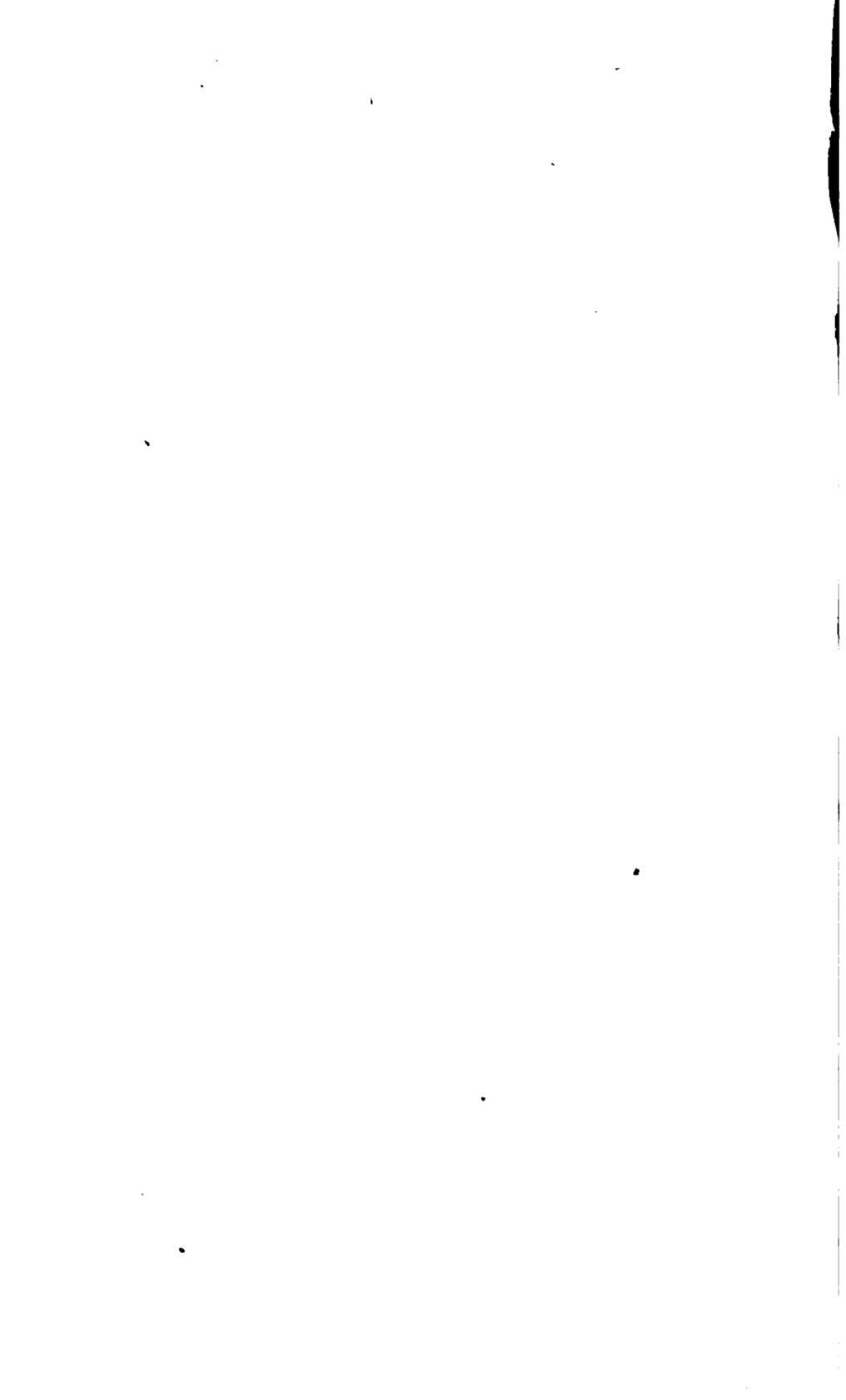
Yes, in that hour if I could feel,
From halls of glee

And Beauty's presence one would steal
In secrecy,
And come and sit and weep by me
In night's deep noon—
Oh! I would ask of memory
No other boon.

But ah! a lonelier fate is mine,
A deeper wo;
From all I love in youth's sweet time
I soon must go;
Drawn round me my pale robes of white,
In a dark spot
To sleep through death's long, dreamless night,
Lone and forgot.



FUGITIVE PIECES.



FUGITIVE PIECES.

THE RUINS OF PALENQUE.

“ We considered the oratorio or altar the most interesting portion of the ruins of Palenque. * * * We could not but regard it as a holy place, dedicated to the gods, and consecrated by the religious observances of a past and unknown people. Comparatively the hand of ruin has spared it, and the great tablet, surviving the wreck of elements, stands perfect and entire. Lonely, deserted, and without any worshippers at its shrine, the figures and characters are distinct as when the people who reared it went up to pay their adorations before it. To us it was all a mystery; silent, defying the most scrutinizing gaze and reach of intellect. * * *

“ What we had before our eyes was grand, curious, and remarkable enough. Here were the remains of a cultivated, polished, and peculiar people, who had passed through all the stages incident to the rise and fall of nations, reached their golden age, and perished, entirely unknown. The links which connected them with the human family were severed and lost, and these were the only memorials of their footsteps upon earth. We lived in the ruined

palace of their kings; we went up to their desolate temples and fallen altars; and wherever we moved we saw the evidences of their taste, their skill in arts, their wealth and power. In the midst of desolation and ruin we looked back to the past, cleared away the gloomy forest, and fancied every building perfect, with its terraces and pyramids, its sculptured and painted ornaments, grand, lofty, and imposing, and overlooking an immense inhabited plain; we called back into life the strange people who gazed at us in sadness from the walls; pictured them, in fanciful costumes and adorned with plumes of feathers, ascending the terraces of the palace and the steps leading to the temples; and often we imagined a scene of unique and gorgeous beauty and magnificence, realizing the creations of oriental poets, the very spot which fancy would have selected for the "Happy Valley" of Rasselas. In the romance of the world's history nothing ever impressed me more forcibly than the spectacle of this once great and lovely city, overturned, desolate, and lost; discovered by accident, overgrown with trees for miles around, and without even a name to distinguish it. Apart from every thing else, it was a mourning witness to the world's mutations.

"Nations melt
From Power's high pinnacles, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go."

Stephens's Travels in Central America.

AMIDST this dense and wavy wood,
These wild birds' melody,
Death rears, in regal solitude,
A throne in mystery;

And fanes and temples prostrate lie,
Beneath decay's dark pall,
Proclaiming—ah! too mournfully,
A nation's rise and fall.

Here mould-clad lies the royal hearth,
The monarch's gorgeous home;
The shrine where knelt the proud of earth,
And many a fallen dome—
A sepulchre—a buried crown,
Where Death doth vigil keep,
By those who calmly have lain down
To their eternal sleep—

The sculptured urn, the breathing bust,
By burning Genius wrought,
Arise amidst the mouldering dust—
Stern chronicles of thought;
And through the dim veil of decay
Departed splendors shine,
And relics of a brighter day
Survive the wreck of time.

As if in mockery of decay,
A rose smiles on yon tomb,

And cypresses, in dark array,
Hang round their shadowy gloom ;
Deep tones come on the swelling breeze,
Of nature's minstrelsy ;
Wild anthems warble from the trees,
But bring no tale of thee.—

Wake ! oh ye slumbering ruins, wake !
Arise, ye desolate ;
And from oblivion's tomb, oh, break
The mystery of thy fate !
Send forth upon the echo's breath,
Ye long-deserted halls,
The tale of wo, and blood, and death,
Of thy beleaguered walls !

Rise ! thou dark spirit of decay,
Burst from thy gloomy cell,
Tell by what hand, or in what way,
A mighty city fell !—
Tell me if shepherds once dwelt here,
Or warriors fierce and bold,
A desert race, or Turk, or Seer,
Or Israel's tribes of old ?

Oh ! say, if here the holy fire
Was o'er these altars shed ;
If Priest or Prophet struck the lyre,
Or hallowed victim bled ;
Around this consecrated shrine
If thousands gathering trod,
And upward swelled the song divine,
And bent the knee to God ?

No history chronicles thy tale,
Or minstrel in his song
Thy battles fierce, or shout, or wail,
Or chivalry hath sung ;
But moat, and tower, and sculptured pier,
And battlement, speak loud
That glory's footsteps lingered here,
The mighty and the proud :

But o'er thy wrongs, and doleful tale,
Whate'er was thy renown,
Fate long hath drawn her mystic veil,—
Thy glory hath gone down ;
And all that human eye can scan
Of thee—O Pile ! of yore,
Is, once were here the haunts of man,
Thou wast, and art no more.

DREAMS OF ITALY.

“E tanto crebbe con lo studio questa disposizione che talvolta mi si accendeva nel petto lo strano e tormentoso desiderio di vedere, e ragionare con alcuna larva degli antichi, evocandola dagli abissi della morte.” *LE NOTTI ROMANE.*

I.

Why do my sad thoughts rove to thee,
And linger aye, fair Italy?—
Thy winding vales, and green-wood dells,
Of flowers the fragrant citadels;
Thy balmy groves, thy cloudless sky,
Thy mouldering tombs, and ancient halls,
Where Art has hung the storied walls
With works of immortality,
I have not seen, and yet thou art
The land that haunts my dreaming heart.
In hours of wild imagining,
I turn to thee—O mournful land!—
The home of all that's sad or bland!
As to a beauty sorrowing,
Bereft of all that life endears,
Yet smiling through her sunny tears;

The spot where death has reared his shrine
Among the things that were divine ;
And oft above thy dusky bier,
In dreams, I pour a mourner's tear.
E'en as I sit and write of thee,
Though 'tween us flows the fearful sea,
I feel thy soft airs fan my brow,
And hear the breezes sighing low
Through many a blooming myrtle tree,
And citron bower beside the lea ;
I hear thy limpid fountains gush,
The streamlets down the mountains rush,
The blithesome birds upon the wing,
The Improvisatrices sing,
And small feet on the moonlit strand
Tripping the graceful saraband.

II.

Yes, thou dost seem like that blest spot
To me—O hallowed Italy !
Which none have ever quite forgot—
The haunts of budding infancy,—
Where childhood laughed away its hours,
And left its smile upon the flowers.

III.

THE least memento borne from thee,
The page that tells thy history ;
Thy wild romance, thy thrilling story,
Thy bloody feuds, and faded glory ;
The birth, the fame, the lasting wrong,
And wailing of thy sons of song ;
Thy language, that is softer still
Than the low music of the rill
That wends along some fairy lea,—
All have a mystic charm for me.

IV.

AND oft, when sleep each sense doth chain
In the mysterious spell of dreams,
I walk along thy flowing streams,
Or by thy blue expanding main,
Where aloes rear their blooming heads,
And crystal streamlets onward leap
O'er golden vines and violet beds,
Soon wedding with the rolling deep ;

Where flowerets smile, the birds sing free,
The sun shines ever cloudlessly,
Until I reach decaying Rome ;
Reclining there upon a tomb,
I raise the misty veil of time
And view her in meridian prime,
Before her era of decline,
Ere she had known a **CATILINE** :
Her marble founts, her splendid domes,
Her monuments and gorgeous homes,
And Lupercals ; her pageantry,
Her ranks of prancing cavalry ;
And then behold these scenes sublime
Go drifting down the tide of time ;
Unpeopled temples round me lying,
Proud statues from their base o'erthrown,
Midst palaces the rude winds sighing
The solemn dirge of ages flown ;
Or give an ear to the sad moan
Of those who from the spirit-land
Have come to weep o'er glories gone—
All that was mighty, holy, grand.

V.

WITH folded arms, and furrowed brow,
Stern MARIUS moves before me slow ;
Then pensively among the tombs,
Wrapped in his toga, CATO comes,
Along each gloomy winding walks,
And of her former splendor talks,
Deplores her altered, ruined state,
And weeps above his country's fate.

VI.

I SEE her traitors by me glide,
The blood gush from great CÆSAR's side,
And when his noble form they felled,
His bleeding vesture upward held ;
And hear the tones of ANTONY
Moving the crowd to mutiny ;
And coming from the forum near,
The voice of TULLY soft and clear,
Pleading her cause
With loud applause ;

The sprightly **HORACE** read his ode
To suit his audience' changing mood,—
When **VIRGIL**'s deep and flowing lyre
Awakes my spirit's latent fire,
And leads me to Lavinia's shore,
 Where cities thick in ruin lie,¹
Strewing the wide Campagna o'er
 With many a classic memory;
There dwell upon the sacred ground,
Where genius peopled vale and mound²
With heroes bold and deeds of strife,
And gave to dust eternal life:
Survey where **PLINY**'s villa stood,³
Along the green Laurentine wood;
Where **CICERO**, **LUCRETIA** dwelt,⁴
Her breast the self-aimed poniard felt;
The Saracens o'er meadows damp,
 In many a savage glittering rank,
Beleaguering the Alban camp;
 Mountains of dead all cold and dank;
The conquered army fast receding;
Stern warriors on the red field bleeding;
Proud cities now in queenly pride,
Then floating down time's murky tide,

Where empires in decay lie hid,
Review again the *Aeneid*.

VII.

THENCE to TORQUATO's cell I go,
And hear his mournful tale of wo,
Of ESTE's rage—ALPHONSO's ire,
That he presumptuous should aspire
So high as LEONORA's hand,
Or dare resist his high command.
Next DANTE in the exile's land,
His snowy locks by zephyrs fanned,
Weeping along the desert wold,
All pale and haggard, I behold ;
Or on the rock he often sought,⁵
Near the old castle Tulmino,
Or midst the hills of Gubbio,
Moulding imperishable thought ;
And linger long in PETRARCH's grove
To hear him sing immortal love,
His sorrows to the breezes pour,
And chant his LAURA's beauty o'er.

VIII.

Why my sad thoughts do rove to thee—
O bright, enchanting Italy !
Enamored thus, I cannot say,—
 But oft, methinks, when sleep controls
The sense, the spirit steals away
 To mingle with congenial souls,
Who down from some more hallowed sphere
Descending, come to linger near
The cherished spot which gave them birth,
And guard the pure and loved on earth.

N O T E S .

NOTE 1, Sect. VI. p. 211.

“Where cities thick in ruin lie.”

“Between Terracina and Visterna on the road to Rome, a distance of thirty miles, once stood, it is said, twenty-three Volscian cities.

“Invasions of the Saracens, in the middle ages, aided the progress of destruction ; and we have now to seek, amid unpeopled woods, noxious swamps, and pastures on which graze buffaloes, for the cities of Latinus, Turnus, and *Aeneas*.”—*Spalding's History of Italy and the Italian Islands*.

NOTE 2, Sect. VI. p. 211.

“Where genius peopled vale and mound.”

“There is no district in Latium,” says Spalding, “more interesting than the region about the mouth of the Tiber, the scene of the last half of the *Aeneid*. In the magic mirror of poetry, we behold here the glade of the Laurentine Forest, and tread with solemn pleasure those solitary woods and meadows, which the power of genius has peopled with heroic beauty. Here was the site of the classical Ostia, and Laurentum, the city of Father Latinus.”

NOTE 3, Sect. VI. p. 211.

“Survey where **PLINY**’s villa stood.”

Castle Fusano, an old turreted mansion, situated on the Campagna, in a clump of tall pines, a little to the south of the swamp, has been fixed upon by most antiquaries as Pliny’s villa.

NOTE 4, Sect. VI. p. 211.

“Where **CICERO**, **LUCRETIA** dwelt.”

“Near the southern frontier of Latium, the columns and fragments of Cicero’s paternal mansion lie scattered in the cloisters and kitchen-gardens of the little church and monastery of San Domenico Abate.

“The bank is still green, though less shady than when his pleasure-ground covered it: the seats on which he sat, with his brother and Atticus, have crumbled away; but ‘the lofty poplars’ may yet be found.”

“Eleven miles from the modern gate, we should look for Collatia, the dwelling of Lucretia.”—*Spalding’s History of Italy, &c.*

NOTE 5, Sect. VII. p. 212.

“Or on the rock he often sought,
Near the old castle Tulmino,
Or midst the hills of Gubbio,
Moulding imperishable thought.”

“In the district of Gubbio, according to the Latin inscription under a marble bust of him against a wall in one of the chambers, Dante is recorded to have written a considerable portion of the ‘Divina Commedia.’ Near the castle of Tulmino, a rock has been pointed out as a favorite resort of the inspired poet, while engaged in that marvellous and melancholy composition.

“There, nobly pensive, Dante sat and thought.”

“Marius, banished from his country, and resting upon the ruins of Carthage, may have appeared a more august and mournful object; but Dante, in exile, want, and degradation, on a lonely crag, meditating thoughts, combining images, and creating a language for both in which they should for ever speak, presents a far more sublime and touching spectacle of fallen grandeur renovating itself under decay.

“Marius, having ‘mewed his mighty youth,’ flew back to Rome like the eagle to his quarry, surfeited himself with vengeance, and died in a debauch of blood; leaving a name to be execrated through all generations. Dante did not return to Florence; living or dead, he did not return: but his name, cast out and abhorred as it had been, stands the earliest and the greatest of a long line of Tuscan poets, rivalling the most illustrious of their country, not excepting those of even Rome and Ferrara.”—*Lives of the Eminent Men of Italy.*

STANZAS

WRITTEN ON READING GRISWOLD'S 'POETS OF AMERICA.'

— 'Tis the doom
Of spirits of my order to be racked
In life; to wear their hearts out, and consume
Their days in endless strife, and die alone.

LORD BYRON'S PROPHECY OF DANTE, Canto I.

I.

YES, here they are—the records of that band,
The wayward children of sweet poesy,
Collected safely by one fostering hand,
From the dark waves of time's oblivious sea.
The living, whatsoe'er their merits be,
Are here—a simple narrative of those
Who from the sorrowings of earth are free,
Their songs that lofty thoughts to us disclose,
While they in dreamless sleep lie hushed in calm repose.

II.

HERE are the young, the old, the small, the great,
Whose souls with the immortal flame did glow;

Each one hath something mournful in his fate,—
Some grief; and all, a common chord of wo,
That bids the sympathetic tears to flow :
Many have met the poet's general doom,
Of misery and despair—death's early blow ;
And some, enveloped in a ceaseless gloom,
Are struggling sadly on to reach a later tomb.

III.

And some have torn the laurel from their brow,
For lucre midst the busy throng have pressed—
No longer to Apollo's sway they bow ;
A few, by the pure breath of fame caressed,
Serenely on Parnassus' summit rest ;
Some yet are toiling up his rugged side,
And with their rivals hard the prize contest,
Hoping to reach the top, and honored bide,
Beneath his peaceful shades, through life's calm eventide.

IV.

WHAT buds of promise live collected here !
That fell ere they had felt the genial sun,

Or soft reviving breath of zephyr near—
One cheering smile by their young beauty won.
How many flowers, when first their reign begun
Of gloriousness, were suddenly entombed;
How many, ere their flowering half was done,
By chilling blasts, to fade were sadly doomed;
How few of them—alas! through their full season bloomed.

V.

It is a mournful task to scan the fate,
The wretchedness, and bitter suffering,
And calumny, and wo, and wrong, and hate,
The thousand pangs the tender bosoms wring,
Of those whom fate or fame hath forced to sing:
Sad, solitary, shivering here they stay,
For ever panting for some purer spring
Of light, but drinking no congenial ray,
Until they quench their thirst at founts of heavenly day.

VI.

And yet they are God's own peculiar race,
Sent here for a beneficent design,

Amidst aspersions, want, and oft disgrace,
To be interpreters of things divine,
To dimmer eyes to open thought's deep mine,
And soothe the aching hearts by sorrow riven ;
To elevate, awaken, and refine
The wasting talents that to man are given,
With song to gladden earth and light the way to heaven.

VII.

KIND Fosterer of the tried and tuneful race,
Thy hand hath done a just and generous deed ;
Impartially thou here hast given his place
To each, and, void of blame, to all their meed ;
The flowerets kindly culled from every weed :
For this the living will thy name revere,
And bless thee wheresoe'er thy way may lead ;
The spirits of the dead will hover near,
And guard thy wandering steps thro' dangers dark and drear.

THE MAIDEN'S GRIEF.

They sin who tell us love can die.

SOUTHEY.

I KNOW it is a vain wild dream,
The love for thee I've cherished ;
I would, as die the tender leaves,
That it with hope had perished ;—

But oh ! love dieth not with hope,
It lights her funeral pyre,
Which smoulders in the ruined heart,
A slow consuming fire.

I do not ask thee e'er to take
This stricken heart of mine ;
I only tell thee of its flame,
And that it all is thine :

I do not ask thee to forego
The charms that I have not,

Proud wealth, and Beauty's witchery,
To share my lonely lot.

I have no hope in loving thee—
But oh ! I ask to love,
And be the gentle guardian
To lead thy thoughts above.

Thy form is ever in my sleep,
Thy voice I ever hear—
Thine is the name I breathe to heaven
When bent in silent prayer.

THE REQUEST.

WHEN this life shall cease to be,
Lay me not in this cold clime,
Where there is no melody
In the birds' or zephyr's chime ;
Where the icy mountains frown,
Where the moon looks bleakly down—
Hearts are far too cold to weep
O'er the humble poet's sleep.

Bear me to my sunny land,
Where the airs are pure and bland ;
Where the birds are ever singing,
Fountains clearly, softly ringing,
Flowerets opening into bloom
Breathing every where perfume ;
Where the Chesapeake is flowing,
Where the placid skies are glowing,
Where my father's ashes lie,
Where the guardian seraphs sigh,

And above the early dead
Angels' dewy tears are shed,—
Lay me in my silent sleep,
Where warm hearts will come and weep.

MY SWEET GUITAR.

WHEN stars are burning in the sky,
The lonely moon pursues her flight,
And wakes again the memory
Of faded years and sorrow's blight—
The thousand spells—the hallowed dreams,
That fleet as rainbow hues depart,
Leaving behind no cheering beams
To light this lone benighted heart,
And clouds eclipsing Love's pure star,
I come to thee, my sweet guitar !

For when my heart is sick and lone,
And pines for friendship's soothing word,
There is a magic in thy tone,
A sympathy in thy low chords,
That banishes my spirit's dole,
Bids every gloomy thought depart,
And breathes such joy into my soul
As mortals never can impart,
Nor wealth nor fame on me confer—
My sweet—my ever-loved guitar !

IMPROPTU,

ON BEING UNABLE TO FIND THE GRAVE OF MARGARET
M. DAVIDSON, IN THE BURYING-GROUND AT SARATOGA
SPRINGS.

July 2, 1841.

SHADE of Poesy, arise !
Tell me—tell me where she lies !
Tell me if that fragile flower,
Blasted in its early hour ;
If the clay that wrapped the soul,
Whose sweet music o'er us stole
But an hour, then died away
Like a passing angel's lay,
Thus, neglected and alone,
Sleepeth here, without a stone
To tell us where the lovely trust
Mingles with its mother dust.
Yonder is a gorgeous tomb,
Where the white rose is in bloom ;
Here a marble column stands,
Reared and decked by kindred hand ;
But among them hers is not—
Genius !—oh, how sad thy lot !

THE MAIDEN'S REVERY.

'Tis eve, and by this stream I stand,
And think, departed one, of thee—
When first thou here didst take my hand,
And breathe thy hallowed love to me :—
'Twas 'neath this willow's pensive brow—
And it is here, but where art thou ?

Years have rolled by with rapid flight,
And grief has been upon my way ;
The stars and moon look down as bright ;
The earth is clad with flowers as gay ;
And green and verdant every bough
As on that night—but where art thou ?

The hills are here, the mountains blue,
The vales, the bowers of roses fair,
The nightingale, the zephyrs too,
This little streamlet, soft and clear,
And murmuring low and sweetly now
As on that night—but where art thou ?

I'll question thus no more my love,
But lift my streaming eyes awhile
Up to the starry skies above,
And bask in thy angelic smile ;
For well I know, beloved one, now
In yon bright heaven abidest thou.

THE SPOT I LOVE BEST.

Thither where he lies buried!
That single spot is the whole world to me.

COLEBRIDGE.

THERE is one only spot on earth,
That holds my heart beyond all other—
It is the place that gave me birth—
Where lonely dwells my aged mother :

And where the pensive willow weeps,
The streamlet calmly ever flows
Beside the sod where sweetly sleeps
My father in his last repose.

E L L A ,
OR
LOVE'S SPELL.

“ Weep for the love that cannot change ;
Like some unholy spell,
It hangs upon the life that loved,
So vainly, and so well.”

STRANGE I should have loved thee ever,
Faithless, fickle as thou art ;
Stranger still, false one, that never
Can I wrench thee from my heart.
Scorn, like shaft shot from its quiver
Which is dipped in fatal bane,
And doth send death's icy shiver
Through the heart and every vein ;
Lone neglect, the stern decision
That thy presence bids me flee ;
Wrong, and hate, and cold derision—
These I all have borne from thee,
Till my brow in youth's fresh hour
Is by clouds of grief o'ercast,

And I'm with'ring like the flower
O'er which sweeps the simoom's blast ;
Yet, with every kind emotion
That can move the gentle breast,
With all woman's deep devotion,
Still my heart, (that can be blest
But while incense o'er thee breathing,
Whence it only solace finds,)
As the oak the ivy wreathing,
Every tendril round thee twines.
Every thing thy impress beareth
Hath the hallowed spell of thee ;
Look or smile of thine endeareth
Meanest, vilest things to me :
Yet I loathe my soul that clingeth
Round the worthless thing thou art,
Curse the memory that bringeth
Image of thee to my heart.
Oft I've sworn to dash the chalice
From my eager thirsting lips,
Where my soul will seek its solace,
Though it only wormwood sips :
I have tried to cease this pining,
Rouse my with'ring pride,—but vain,

By some skilful, deep designing,
Turn my love to cold disdain ;
But such efforts make thee dearer
To her whom Love's spell hath bound,
Draw the fatal chord still nearer.
Round the heart thy scorn doth wound.

THE LOVERS.

“Their grief was silent and unfathomable.”

THEY met, and looked into each other’s eyes ;
In hers, as in a mirror clear, he saw
A paradise, and she in his beheld
A bright and sunny world, where her pure soul
Could only light, and life, and joyance find ;
But th’ serpent came between them ; then,
Like thunder-riven rocks, apart they dwelt,
Silent, and cold, and withering, until
Their hearts were dead, and they went to the grave,
Their misery to each other unrevealed.

TO E.

Thou'rt gone from this cold world of ours,
A resident above ;
An angel midst unfading bowers,
And songs of changeless love ;
And com'st no more at eventide
To lay thy hand in mine,
With smiles to cheer our own fire-side,
And bid me not repine ;
And yet, lost one, thou art to me
More than the living all can be—
A light that shines from heaven afar,
My morning and my evening star.

I ne'er shall hear again on earth
Thy footsteps' blithesome bound,
Nor meet thee by the parent hearth,
When there we kneel around ;

No! never more shall see below,
Beloved, thy form so fair,
Thy lily cheek and snowy brow,
Thy wealth of golden hair;
And yet, lost one, thou art to me
More than the living all can be—
A light that shines from heaven afar,
My morning and my evening star.

Around me—near me—every where
I hear thy angel voice;
Sweet accents from a viewless sphere,
Bidding my heart rejoice:
At morn or eve, in vale or grove,
Where'er my footsteps tend,
Down from thy starry realms above
Thy meek eyes on me bend.
And thus, lost one, thou art to me
More than the living all can be—
A light that shines from heaven afar,
My morning and my evening star.

TO THEA.

“Her love was registered in Heaven.”

By day, by night, in weal or wo,
Where'er on earth my lot may be ;
'Neath orient skies—midst polar snow,
I'll still love thee.

If it be mine to dwell afar
In distant lands beyond the sea,
Where savages untutored are,
I'll still love thee.

Or in my home near thee to dwell,
A simple child of minstrelsy,
And win the world with song's sweet spell
I'll still love thee.

If ever in the festal throng
I go, midst sounds of revelry,
And Beauty's smile, and dance, and song,
I'll still love thee.

Or if the waves of sorrow roll
Around me wild, tempestuously,
And overwhelm at last my soul,
I'll still love thee.

And when upon the couch of death,
And time is closing unto me,
My latest prayer—my latest breath
I'll breathe for thee.

TO MARY.

ENRICHED a mind,
Where'er we find,
With knowledge, virtue pure ;
A gentle heart
Devoid of art,
In innocence secure ;

A golden curl,
Or neck of pearl,
Or hand of snowy white ;
And brow as fair,
And cheek as clear,
As snow drops in the light ;

An eye of blue
Or ebon hue,
Beaming with heavenly fire,
And modest mien
In maiden sheen,
We cannot but admire.

But when we see,
Maid, as in thee,
These truly all combine,
We feel Love's thrill
Our bosoms fill,
And bow at Beauty's shrine.

I FEEL ALONE.

“The light of happiness is in the heart.”

I go where Beauty's cheek is smiling,
Around the social hearth,
And song and music are beguiling
Fond hearts in gentle mirth,
And feel alone.

I walk along the crowded street
Amidst the glittering throng,
And pleasant smiles and greetings meet
From those who've loved me long,
And feel alone.

Oft muse along the water's side,
Where buoyant vessels go
Like living things adown the tide,
And skiffs dart to and fro,
And feel alone.

And listen to the sweet birds singing
In merry, merry glee,
The fountains through the green woods ringing
And leaping sportively,
And feel alone.

Then onward wind from hill to dale,
Midst scenes more wild and rude,
That still to cheer me ever fail—
My heart's a solitude,
Forlorn and lone.

I gaze upon the quiet sky,
In starry splendor dressed,
And view beyond with fancy's eye
A world where angels rest,
Yet feel alone.

At any other time than this
These would my spirit cheer,
And animate it with the bliss
That becks me in yon sphere,
When I feel lone.

But since the voice of that dear one,
That Heaven has destined here
To guide my weary footsteps on,
Falls not upon mine ear,
I feel alone.

And not till he again shall come
Can this sad heart know bliss,
My weary spirit reassume
Its wonted cheerfulness,
And not feel lone.

LINES ON SEEING THE INCONSTANT WEEPING.

'Tis guilt ! the canker-worm that clings
• Its deadly fangs around thy heart,
And o'er thy soul its mildew flings,
And bids thy earthly peace depart.

Thy brow, false one ! is pale and wan;
Thy bosom heaves with bitter sighs—
Ay, dost thou feel now thus forlorn ?—
Hast learned the slighted one to prize ?

Alas ! 'tis sad, but no less true,
That gems when ours lose half their gloss,
Though bright as heaven may be their hue—
And gold possessed is deemed but dross.

The heart thou mourn'st thou hast possessed,
Its every holy thought was thine ;
It sought in thee but to be blessed,
Thy bosom was its earthly shrine.

False one! thou couldst not prize it then,
Its hallowed love was spurned by thee—
That heart can ne'er be thine again—
Thy falsehood bade it thence be free.

WHEN WE GIVE UP THE DEAD.

AROUND the couch may hover Death,
And steal away the parting breath ;
The sheet and shroud in pallid fold
May wrap our prostrate friends and cold,
Yet 'tis not then we give them up,
And taste grief's bitterest cup.

Their forms are in the coffin laid,
And earth's last sacred rite is paid ;
The lid is closed, the grating screw
For ever shuts them from our view,
Yet 'tis not then we give them up,
And taste grief's bitterest cup.

But when the grave we gather round,
And lay them in the cold, damp ground,
And o'er its dark edge eager bend,
And hear the rumbling earth descend,—
Ah ! then it is we give them up,
And taste grief's bitterest cup.

THE RUIN.

HERE once were gathered round thy hearth
The bright, the young, the gay,
The joyous heart of buoyant mirth,
The head of silvery gray,
And woman's smile, and man's caress,
And childhood's laughing glee,
The maiden in her bridal dress,
Were often known to thee.

And brightly through the festal hall
The cheek of Beauty glowed,
And Music stirred the hearts of all,
The sparkling goblet flowed ;
And as was sipped the brimming cup,
And glared the inebriate eye,
Loud on the midnight air went up
The wild festivity.

Here, too, the widow mourned her lord,
The orphan pined his lot,

And Death broke many a silken chord,
And Beauty smiled for naught;
And swept the busy round of life
Like April shadows by,
The fierce conflicting scenes of strife,
Man's wo and revelry.

And here moved on the gorgeous train
Of pompous pageantry,
The fierce blood dancing in each vein,
The proud heart beating free,
The chieftain on his bounding steed,
With plume of gaudy dye,
The war-horse dashing at full speed,
The banner borne on high.

And far o'er hill, and moat, and vale,
Pealed loud the bugle horn,
And deep-toned drum, and clashing mail,
And martial clarion;
And fearful flashed the sabre's gleam,
And boomed the cannon's breath,
And bubbled warm life's crimson stream
Along the field of death.

A SONNET.

'Tis past the noon of night ! and I am lone,
And mournful still : I have relived the past—
The visions that were far too pure to last—
The memories of the good and early known
Back from the gulf of time again have flown :
And I have held sad converse with the dear,
Though lost, and shed the sympathetic tear,
And clasped the hand of those for ever gone.
Long days, and sleepless nights, and weary weeks—
Dark Melancholy, thou hast held thy sway !—
Driven each pleasing thought with hope away,
And drenched with burning floods my pallid cheeks—
Oh ! wilt thou ne'er return—bright Poesy !
And from her dismal thrall my spirit free ?

THE GENERAL ON HIS BIER.

He sleeps upon his sable bier
How calm and still!
No battle-cries his pulses stir—
No war-notes shrill.

An hour ago, that lofty brow
Was flushed with life,
And from those eyes fierce flashed the glow
Of noble strife.

Each vein thrilled with the dancing blood
Of courage strong,
Whose faintest signs with fire imbued
His soldier throng.

That stout arm swung the sabre keen
On the red field—
That dauntless heart to armies then
Disdained to yield.

But now he lies so moveless here,
So helplessly,
An infant in the hour of fear
More strong than he.

I gaze intently on this brow—
This lifeless whole,
And ask where is the spirit now—
The mighty soul,

That gave unto this mouldering dust
A giant's sway,
Then, as a weed upon life's drift,
Flung it away.

MAIDEN, SINCE I SAW THEE LAST.

MAIDEN, since I saw thee last,
Shadows o'er thy life have passed—
Tears have dimmed thy cheek's fresh rose—
Grief hath broken thy repose—
Lovely visions from thee sped—
Peace for ever from thee fled.

In thy languid eyes a beam
Lights thy bosom's troubled stream—
Heavenly feelings cankering there—
Hope ingulfed in deep despair,
Fully speak thy spirit's pain :
Thou hast loved—but loved in vain !

Seek no words to tell me now
Of thy lover's faithless vow—
Of the fiery venom'd dart
That hath pierced thy tender heart—
Golden dreams of wedded bliss
Whelmed in Sorrow's dark abyss.

From the pang that ceaseless wrings
To their depths thy spirit's strings—
From the listlessness of life—
From thy bosom's burning strife,
Tears alone can give thee rest—
Maiden, weep upon my breast !

Well I comprehend thy wo,
All thy wretchedness I know—
All the darkness of the soul,
When the heart hath missed its goal—
Tears alone can give thee rest—
Weep upon this faithful breast !

THE STORM.*

A TRANSLATION FROM THE ÆNEID, BOOK I., LINE 81.

WHEN this he said, against the hollow rock
With his broad weapon furiously he struck—
The Winds rush forth, as if for War's array,
And in vast whirlwinds sweep the port and bay;—
Athwart the ocean from their deepest seat,
The raging Eurus and the South Winds meet;
Swift from the West thick storms in fury pour,
And roll the mighty waves along the shore—
Then far amid the heaven and yeasty main
Resound the crash of masts and cries of men—
Quickly the clouds snatch from the Trojan's eyes
The blazing sun and all the glowing skies—
Black Night in total darkness veils the sea—
The thunders roar around them fearfully—
Quick lightnings flash along the murky air,
And Death and swift Destruction on them glare
 The ships before the awful breakers reel,
With sudden fear Æneas' limbs congeal—

* This is a Translation of the Latin Note at the end of Florence, page 45; but was finished too late for insertion in that place.

Cold horror creeps along each curdling vein,
He groans aloud with inward grief and pain,
And supplicating rears his hands to heaven,
And says—"O bless'd ! thrice bless'd ! to whom 'twas given
In battle on their native shores to fall,
Before their fathers, 'neath proud Ilium's wall :—
Tydides ! bravest of the Grecian train !
Why could I not upon the Trojan plain
This wretched life pour forth by thy right hand,
And rest in death among the faithful band,
Where valiant Hector—huge Sarpedon sleep,
Beneath Achilles' sword's relentless sweep ;
Where Simoës rolls beneath its bloody wave
So many shields, and helms, and slaughtered brave !"
And now a blustering adverse storm descends
Against the sails, the straining canvass rends—
Breaks all their oars—bears far away the spars,
And rolls the mountain billows to the stars—
Averts the lofty prow, and with the tide
The creaking vessel broaches on her side :
Around her now the raging breakers rise,
And dash their liquid summits to the skies ;—
Anon the waters yawn till sand appears,
And rocks to fright the trembling mariners.
Three vessels broken by the tempest's blast

Upon the hidden rocks the South Winds cast,
To whose huge backs uplifted from the wave
The name of Altars the Italians gave,
And three the East Winds from the billows urge
Among the frightful shoals and foaming surge,
And wedge them in an eddying bank of sand—
A wretched sight to the bewildered band !

That which the Lycians and Orontes bore
Before *Æ*neas' eyes a wave swept o'er,
And headlong from the poop the pilot hurled ;
Three times around the labouring vessel whirled,
Then suddenly with fierce, voracious sweep,
Submerged her far beneath the boiling deep.

Her scattered crew now float upon the brine,
With arms of men, and household gods divine,
And Trojan wares, and goods, and treasured store
Which they had borne from ancient Ilium's shore;
O'er Ilioneus' strong ship the storm prevails,
Next that in which the brave Achates sails,
O'er Abas' then and old Alethes' rides,
While through their gaping seams and opening sides
With fearful speed the hostile water glides.











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